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Marmion's Defiance of Douglas

FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

The Imperial Scott

Poetical Works

II

MARMION, HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS
THE LORD OF THE ISLES
AND OTHER POEMS

WITH 36 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
PICTURES BY FAMOUS ARTISTS



LARFA

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The Poems and their Stories

"MARMION : A Tale of Flodden Field" was begun towards the end of 1806. Shortly afterwards, Constable offered 1000 guineas for it without having seen a line, and this sum was paid long before its publication on 23rd February 1808. The original quarto was issued in London by Murray and Miller. On its appearance Southey wrote to the author : "The story is made of better materials than the 'Lay,' yet they are not so well fitted together. There is nothing so finely conceived in your former poem as the death of Marmion : there is nothing finer in its conception anywhere. The introductory epistles I did not wish away, because, as poems, they gave me great pleasure ; but I wished them at the end of the volume—or at the beginning—anywhere except where they were." Southey here gives expression to the general sentiment of later critics.

Jeffrey attacked the new poem in the "Edinburgh Review," but at the same time wrote to the author hoping that his criticism would make no difference in their friendship. It is noteworthy that when Jeffrey came to republish his essays in 1843 the article of April 1808 on "Marmion" was not included. It was in 1848

that Lockhart, in response to Cadell's wish, prepared an abridgment of the "Life," and he also passed over the criticism.

Scott assured Jeffrey that the article had not disturbed his digestion, though he hoped neither the booksellers nor the public would agree with its opinions; and he begged that the critic would come to dinner at the hour previously appointed. "Mr. Jeffrey appeared accordingly, and was received by his host with the frankest cordiality; but had the mortification to observe that the mistress of the house, though perfectly polite, was not quite so easy with him as usual. She, too, behaved herself with exemplary civility during the dinner; but could not help saying, in her broken English, when her guest was departing, 'Well, good-night, Mr. Jeffrey—dey tell me you have abused Scott in de 'Review,' and I hope Mr. Constable has paid *you* very well for writing it.'" Lockhart, himself, who tells this story, adds that he always considered "Marmion" "the greatest of Scott's poems."

As to what "the booksellers and the public thought," the first edition, at a guinea and a half, was disposed of within a month, while the aggregate legitimate circulation between 1808 and 1848 reached 60,000.

Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" appeared on 1st March 1809 anonymously. Its bitter references in verse and note to the money paid to Scott led in 1812 to a correspondence between the two poets, Murray acting as intermediary. Scott, wishing "to clear his personal character from any tinge of mercenary or sordid feeling in the eyes of a contemporary of genius,"

"explained that "Marmion" was not written upon contract for a sum of money, "though it is too true that it was sold and published in a very unfinished state (which I have since regretted) to enable me to extricate myself from some engagements which fell suddenly upon me, by the unexpected misfortunes of a very near relation." Byron replied expressing his sorrow that Scott should have thought it worth while to notice "the evil works of my nonage," and adding that "your explanation is too kind not to give me pain." From this time, says Lockhart, "the epistolary intercourse between Scott and Byron continued to be kept up ; and it ere long assumed a tone of friendly confidence equally honourable to both these great competitors, without rivalry, for the favour of the literary world."

Of Scott's three principal poems, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Marmion," and "The Lady of the Lake," Sir Francis Doyle, granting the freshness and originality of the first, and the grace and tenderness of the third, awards to the second first place in point of power. "There is, I think," he says, "no story of its kind in our language that I place above it ; none, at any rate, since the Knight's Tale in Chaucer." Noting that Marmion was buried, not in Lichfield Cathedral, as proposed, but carelessly and in a nameless grave, and that this fate actually befell the Archbishop of St. Andrews, a natural son of James IV., who was little more than a boy when he fell with his father at Flodden, Doyle says : "It is obvious that the quasi-historical details invented by Scott,

To point a moral and adorn a tale,

are, in a certain sense, actually true—and true of the very battle to which he has appropriated them. This surely has not happened according to blind chance—not through a mere coincidence ; but because Scott's insight into the heart of life was unerring ; because he had a power of extracting the spirit of history out of vast masses of knowledge, duly assimilated and digested, as the bee gathers her honey from a thousand flowers."

"Harold the Dauntless" was begun shortly after "The Bridal of Triermain" was finished, and it was published, like that work, anonymously. The publishers were Longman and Constable, and the form 12mo. The date of publication was January 1817. It had to be taken up from time to time, as Lockhart says, "as the amusement of *horæ subsecivæ*." When Scott, in his introduction to "The Lord of the Isles," wrote in 1830, "I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous," he forgot that a part of his own poem had been printed before the appearance of "Childe Harold." The volume, says his biographer, "had, in Messrs. Constable's phrase, 'considerable success.' It has never, however, been placed on a level with 'Triermain'; and though it contains many vigorous pictures, and splendid verses, and here and there some happy humour, the confusion and harsh transitions of the fable, and the dim rudeness of character and manners, seem sufficient to account for this inferiority in public favour."

At one time Scott himself seems to have had a good opinion of the poem, but after its publication he wrote : "I thought once I should have made it something clever,

but it turned vapid on my imagination ; and I finished it at last with hurry and impatience." It is worth mention that the poem was attributed by many not to Erskine, but to Hogg. Amongst later critics Professor Saintsbury is more tolerant than either the author or his biographer.

"The Lord of the Isles," some progress with which had been made when Scott was invited to accompany his friend Erskine and other Lighthouse Commissioners on a visit to the Orkney and Shetland Islands, in July and August 1814, owes to his impressions during that voyage as well as during his first visit to the Hebrides in 1810—when it was projected—some of its most striking passages. Published by Constable and by Longman on 18th January 1815, in quarto form, Constable having agreed to give 1500 guineas for one half of the copyright, while the other moiety was retained by the author, its reception is comparable to that of "Rokeby." The first edition was quickly sold, and before the author's poems were collected the sale amounted to about 12,250 copies. "This," says Lockhart, "in the case of almost any other author would have been splendid success ; but as compared with what he had previously experienced, even in his 'Rokeby,' and still more so as compared with the enormous circulation at once attained by Lord Byron's early tales, which were then following each other in almost breathless succession, the falling-off was decided."

The poem had been delayed, and the concluding stanzas written in hot haste. Both the "Edinburgh" and the "Quarterly" reviews were very critical. "Here," says the former, "is another genuine Lay of

the Great Minstrel, with all his characteristic faults, beauties, and irregularities. The same glow of colouring—the same energy of narration—the same amplitude of description—are conspicuous; with the same still more characteristic disdain of puny graces and small originalities—the true poetical hardihood, in the strength with which he urges on his Pegasus fearlessly, and aiming gallantly at the great ends of truth and effect, stoops but rarely to study the means by which they are to be attained; avails himself without scruple of common sentiments and common images wherever they seem fitted for his purpose; and is original by the very boldness of his borrowing, and impressive by his disregard of epigram and emphasis.” The reviewer proceeds to denounce the title as a misnomer, because the ostensible hero is not the Lord of the Isles, but King Robert Bruce, and to find fault with the “scantiness” of the narrative, the want of connexion in the story, and the lack of diversity of scene and character—points as to which the careful reader will be in no hurry to agree.

The writer in the “Quarterly” concludes: “The many beautiful passages which we have extracted from the poem, combined with the brief remarks subjoined to each canto, will sufficiently show that, although ‘The Lord of the Isles’ is not likely to add very much to the reputation of Mr. Scott, yet this must be imputed rather to the greatness of his previous reputation than to the absolute inferiority of the poem itself. Unfortunately, its merits are merely incidental, while its defects are mixed up with the very elements of the poem.”

Soon after, Scott remarked to Ballantyne that “Byron

hits the mark where I don't even pretend to fledge my arrow." But the character of Bruce and the picture of the Battle of Bannockburn alone suffice to make "The Lord of the Isles" worthy of a place in the estimation of all true lovers of the poetry of action. Jeffrey seems to have been "shocked" by the want of "animosity" in the description of Bannockburn. For other than merely critical reasons may be noted Sir Francis Doyle's comments on this point, in references to Flodden and Bannockburn. After quoting the lines in "Marmion" beginning "But as they left the dark'ning heath," he says: "Where, out of Homer, will you find so grand a song of battle? And it is all the grander to us, because it is not a hymn of victory, but of sublime defiance, under the frowns of hostile fortune. It belongs, I think, to the finer instincts of humanity, to the finer instincts of our British nature, at any rate, that we take more interest in defeat bravely met, in crushing misfortunes nobly confronted, than in any ordinary triumph."

Scott watched the progress of the Peninsular campaign with the closest interest, and when steps were taken in London early in 1811 to collect subscriptions for the relief of the Portuguese, he at once offered to contribute to the funds the profits of a poem which he proposed to write upon the subject connected with the scene of their patriotic struggle. His offer was immediately accepted. The poem—"The Vision of Don Roderick"—was published in quarto in the following July, by John Ballantyne and by Longman.

The Earl of Dalkeith wrote to the poet on the occasion: "Those with ample fortunes and thicker heads,

may easily give 100 guineas to a subscription, but the man is really to be envied who can draw that sum from his own brains, and apply the produce so beneficially and to so exalted a purpose." In this poem Scott essayed the most difficult of all English measures, the Spenserian stanza, and the work is founded upon a Spanish tradition of the last Gothic King of Spain. "The description of the subterranean hall beneath the Cathedral of Toledo is as good as we should expect," writes Professor Saintsbury, "and the verses on Saragossa and on the forces of the three kingdoms are very fine. But the whole was something of a torso, and it is improbable that Scott could ever have used the Spenserian stanza to good effect for continuous narrative." The use of this stanza was probably dictated by the nature of the theme as well as by the suggestion of Canning and Ellis that he should attempt something by way of a change from his ordinary octosyllabic metre. And he certainly used the Spenserian form to excellent advantage in the close of "The Lady of the Lake."

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I N S C R I B E D
T O T H E
R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E
H E N R Y ,
L O R D M O N T A G U E ,
&c., &c., &c.

INTRODUCTION

MARMION.



WHAT I have to say respecting this Poem may be briefly told. In the Introduction to the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," I have mentioned the circumstances, so far as my literary life is concerned, which induced me to resign the active pursuit of an honourable profession, for the more precarious resources of literature. My appointment to the Sherifffdom of Selkirk called for a change of residence. I left, therefore, the pleasant cottage I had upon the side of the Esk, for the "pleasanter banks of the Tweed," in order to comply with the law, which requires that the Sheriff shall be resident, at least during a certain number of months, within his jurisdiction. We found a delightful retirement, by my becoming the tenant of my intimate friend and cousin-german, Colonel Russel, in his mansion of Ashestiel, which was unoccupied, during his absence on military service in India. The house was adequate to our accommodation, and the exercise of a limited hospitality. The situation is uncommonly beautiful, by the side of a fine river, whose streams are there very favourable for angling, surrounded by the remains of natural woods, and by hills abounding in game. In point of society, according to the heartfelt phrase of Scripture, we dwelt "amongst our own people;" and as the distance from the metropolis was only thirty miles, we were not out of reach of our Edinburgh friends, in which city we spent the terms of the summer and winter Sessions of the Court, that is, five or six months in the year.

An important circumstance had, about the same time, taken place in my life. Hopes had been held out to me from an in-

fluent quarter, of a nature to relieve me from the anxiety which I must have otherwise felt, as one upon the precarious tenure of whose own life rested the principal prospects of his family, and especially as one who had necessarily some dependence upon the favour of the public, which is proverbially capricious; though it is but justice to add, that, in my own case, I have not found it so. Mr. Pitt had expressed a wish to my personal friend, the right honourable William Dundas, now Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, that some fitting opportunity should be taken to be of service to me; and as my views and wishes pointed to a future rather than an immediate provision, an opportunity of accomplishing this was soon found. One of the Principal Clerks of Session, as they are called (official persons who occupy an important and responsible situation, and enjoy a considerable income), who had served upwards of thirty years, felt himself, from age, and the infirmity of deafness with which it was accompanied, desirous of retiring from his official situation. As the law then stood, such official persons were entitled to bargain with their successors, either for a sum of money, which was usually a considerable one, or for an interest in the emoluments of the office during their life. My predecessor, whose services had been unusually meritorious, stipulated for the emoluments of his office during his life, while I should enjoy the survivorship, on the condition that I discharged the duties of the office in the meantime. Mr. Pitt, however, having died in the interval, his administration was dissolved, and was succeeded by that known by the name of the Fox and Grenville Ministry. My affair was so far completed, that my commission lay in the office subscribed by his Majesty; but, from hurry or mistake, the interest of my predecessor was not expressed in it, as had been usual in such cases. Although, therefore, it only required payment of the fees, I could not in honour take out the commission in the present state, since, in the event of my dying before him, the gentleman whom I succeeded must have lost the vested interest which he had stipulated to retain. I had the honour of an interview with Earl Spencer on the subject, and he, in the most handsome manner, gave directions that the commission should issue as originally intended; adding, that the matter having received the royal assent, he regarded only as a claim of justice what he would have willingly done as an act of favour. I never saw Mr. Fox on this, or on any other occasion, and never made any application to him, conceiving that in doing so I might have been supposed to express political opinions contrary to those which I had always professed. In his private capacity, there is no man to whom I would have been more proud to owe an obligation, had I been so distinguished

By this arrangement I obtained the survivorship of an office the emoluments of which were fully adequate to my wishes ; and as the law respecting the mode of providing for superannuated officers was, about five or six years after, altered from that which admitted the arrangement of assistant and successor, my colleague very handsomely took the opportunity of the alteration, to accept of the retiring annuity provided in such cases, and admitted me to the full benefit of the office.

But although the certainty of succeeding to a considerable income, at the time I obtained it, seemed to assure me of a quiet harbour in my old age, I did not escape my share of inconvenience from the contrary tides and currents by which we are so often encountered in our journey through life. Indeed, the publication of my next poetical attempt was prematurely accelerated, from one of those unpleasant accidents which can neither be foreseen nor avoided.

I had formed the prudent resolution to endeavour to bestow a little more labour than I had yet done on my productions, and to be in no hurry again to announce myself as a candidate for literary fame. Accordingly, particular passages of a poem, which was finally called "*Marmion*," were laboured with a good deal of care, by one by whom much care was seldom bestowed. Whether the work was worth the labour or not, I am no competent judge ; but I may be permitted to say, that the period of its composition was a very happy one, in my life ; so much so, that I remember with pleasure, at this moment, some of the spots in which particular passages were composed. It is probably owing to this, that the introductions to the several Cantos assumed the form of familiar epistles to my intimate friends, in which I alluded, perhaps more than was necessary or graceful, to my domestic occupations and amusements—a loquacity which may be excused by those who remember, that I was still young, light-headed, and happy, and that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

The misfortunes of a near relation and friend, which happened at this time, led me to alter my prudent determination, which had been, to use great precaution in sending this poem into the world ; and made it convenient at least, if not absolutely necessary, to hasten its publication. The publishers of "*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*," emboldened by the success of that poem, willingly offered a thousand pounds for "*Marmion*." The transaction being no secret, afforded Lord Byron, who was then at general war with all who blacked paper, an apology for including me in his satire, entitled "*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*." I never could conceive how an arrangement between an author and his publishers, if satisfactory to the person

concerned, could afford matter of censure to any third party. I had taken no unusual or ungenerous means of enhancing the value of my merchandise—I had never higgled a moment about the bargain, but accepted at once what I considered the handsome offer of my publishers. These gentlemen, at least, were not of opinion that they had been taken advantage of in the transaction, which indeed was one of their own framing; on the contrary, the sale of the Poem was so far beyond their expectation, as to induce them to supply the author's cellars with what is always an acceptable present to a young Scottish housekeeper, namely, a hogshead of excellent claret.

The Poem was finished in too much haste to allow me an opportunity of softening down, if not removing, some of its most prominent defects. The nature of *Marmion's* guilt, although similar instances were found, and might be quoted, as existing in feudal times, was nevertheless not sufficiently peculiar to be indicative of the character of the period, forgery being the crime of a commercial, rather than a proud and warlike age. This gross defect ought to have been remedied or palliated. Yet I suffered the tree to lie as it had fallen. I remember my friend, Dr. Leyden, then in the East, wrote me a furious remonstrance on the subject. I have, nevertheless, always been of opinion that corrections, however in themselves judicious, have a bad effect—after publication. An author is never so decidedly condemned as on his own confession, and may long find apologists and partisans until he gives up his own cause. I was not, therefore, inclined to afford matter for censure out of my own admissions; and, by good fortune, the novelty of the subject, and, if I may say so, some force and vivacity of description, were allowed to atone for many imperfections. Thus the second experiment on the public patience, generally the most perilous,—for the public are then most apt to judge with rigour, what in the first instance they had received, perhaps, with imprudent generosity,—was in my case decidedly successful. I had the good fortune to pass this ordeal favourably, and the return of sales before me makes the copies amount to thirty-six thousand printed between 1808 and 1825, besides a considerable sale since that period. I shall here pause upon the subject of "*Marmion*," and, in a few prefatory words to "*The Lady of the Lake*," the last poem of mine which obtained eminent success, I will continue the task which I have imposed on myself respecting the origin of my productions.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is hardly to be expected, that an Author whom the Public have honoured with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the Author of MARMION must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first Poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character ; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the Author was, if possible, to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his Story, and to prepare them for the manners of the Age in which it is laid. Any Historical Narrative, far more an attempt at Epic composition, exceeded his plan of a Romantic Tale ; yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the Public.

The Poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

Ashestiel, 1808.

[MARMION was first published in 4to., February, 1808.]

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST.

TO

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear:
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through :
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed ;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam ;
Away hath passed the heather-bell
That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell ;
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yare.

Marmion.

The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines :
In meek despondency they eye
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold ;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel ;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower ;
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower ;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie ;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings ;

The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But oh ! my Country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate ?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise ;
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasp'd the victor steel ?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows ;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine ;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallow'd tomb !

Deep grav'd in every British heart,
O never let those names depart !
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave ;¹
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given.
Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd,—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia,² Trafalgar ;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Briton's weal was early wise ;
Alas ! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave !

[Nelson.]

² Copenhagen.

His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself ;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the free-
man's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand ;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright ;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne :
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill !

Oh think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,
With Palinure's unalter'd mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood ;
Each call for needful rest repell'd,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way !
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
One unpolluted church remains,

Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallow'd day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray ;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here !

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh ;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employ'd, and wanted most ;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound ;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine ;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below :
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns th s grave,
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings ;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As it some angel spoke agen,
" All peace on earth, good-will to men ;
If ever from an English heart,
O, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Briton died !

When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave,
Was bartered by a timorous slave.
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
The sullied olive-branch return'd,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast !
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,
How high they soar'd above the crowd !
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place ;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar ;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Look'd up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of PITT and FOX alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride !—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon FOX's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier ;

O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
And FOX's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,—
“Here let their discord with them die.
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb.
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?”

Rest, ardent Spirits ! till the cries
Of dying Nature bid you rise ;
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse ;
Then, O, how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain,
Though not unmark'd from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme :
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung ;
The Bard you deign'd to praise, your deathless
names has sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,
My wilder'd fancy still beguile !
From this high theme how can I part,
Ere half unloaded is my heart !
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood,
That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,
Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams could flow—
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
In one spring-tide of ecstasy !—
It will not be—it may not last—
The vision of enchantment's past :

Like frostwork in the morning ray,
The fancied fabric melts away ;
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle, are gone ;
And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.
Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures, bleak and brown,
The farm begirt with copsewood wild,
The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son ;
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day,
In plucking from yon fen the reed,
And watch it floating down the Tweed ;
Or idly list the shrilling lay,
With which the milk-maid cheers her way,
Marking its cadence rise and fail,
As from the field, beneath her pail,
She trips it down the uneven dale ;
Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn ;
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one, who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.

But thou, my friend, can'st fitly tell,
(For few have read romance so well,)
How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway ;

How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in vain ;
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
Still throb for fear and pity's sake ;
As when the Champion of the Lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse ;¹
Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,
(Alas, that lawless was their love !)
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
And freed full sixty knights ; or when,
A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.²

The mightiest chiefs of British song
Scorn'd not such legends to prolong :
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme ;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,³
But that a ribald King and Court
Bade him toil on, to make them sport ;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play ;

¹ [See Note 1.]² [See Note 2.]³ Dryden's melancholy account of his projected Epic Poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an "Essay on Satire," addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the Translation of Juvenal.

The world defrauded of the high design,
 Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd the
 lofty line.

Warm'd by such names, well may we then,
 Though dwindled sons of little men,
 Essay to break a feeble lance
 In the fair fields of old romance ;
 Or seek the moated castle's cell,
 Where long through talisman and spell,
 While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
 Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept :
 There sound the harpings of the North,
 Till he awake and sally forth,
 On venturous quest to prick again,
 In all his arms, with all his train,
 Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
 Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
 And wizard with his wand of might,
 And errant maid on palfrey white.
 Around the Genius weave their spells,
 Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells ;
 Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd ;
 And Honour, with his spotless shield ;
 Attention, with fix'd eye ; and Fear,
 That loves the tale she shrinks to hear ;
 And gentle Courtesy ; and Faith,
 Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death ;
 And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
 Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement shown,
 A worthy meed may thus be won
 Ytene's¹ oaks—beneath whose shade
 Their theme the merry minstrels made,

The New Forest in Hampshire, anciently so called.

Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,¹
And that Red King,² who, while of old,
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renew'd such legendary strain ;
For thou hast sung, how He of Gaul,
That Amadis so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foil'd in fight
The Necromancer's felon might ;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopex's mystic love ;
Hear, then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

¹ The "History of Bevis of Hampton" is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of chivalry. I am happy to say that the memory of Sir Bevis is still fragrant in his town of Southampton ; the gate of which is sentineled by the effigies of that doughty knight-errant and his gigantic associate.

² William Rufus.

MARMION.

CANTO FIRST.

The Castle.

I.

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,¹
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone :
The battled towers, the donjon keep,²
The loophole grates, where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seem'd forms of giant height :
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flash'd back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.

¹ [See Note 3.]

² It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached. Here, in case of the outward defences being gained, the garrison retreated to make their last stand. The donjon contained the great hall and principal rooms of state for solemn occasions, and also the prison of the fortress; from which last circumstance we derive the modern and restricted use of the word *duncheon*.

II.

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
 Less bright, and less, was flung ;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the Donjon Tower,
 So heavily it hung.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The Castle gates were barr'd ;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The Warder kept his guard ;
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering song.

III.

A distant trampling sound he hears,
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill a plump¹ of spears,
 Beneath a pennon gay ;
A horseman, darting from the crowd,
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
 Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade,
That closed the Castle barricade,
His buglehorn he blew ;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warn'd the Captain in the hall,
 For well the blast he knew ;
And joyfully that knight did call,
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

¹ This word properly applies to a flight of water-fowl ; but is applied by analogy, to a body of horse.

" There is a knight of the North Country,
Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears."
Flodden Field.

IV.

“ Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow ;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot ;
Lord MARMION waits below ! ”
Then to the Castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparr'd,
And let the drawbridge fall.

V.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
His helm hung at the saddlebow ;
Well by his visage you might know
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
And had in many a battle been ;
The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd,
A token true of Bosworth field ;
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire ;
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thick moustache, and curly hair,

Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age ;
His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,
Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camps a leader sage.

VI.

Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel ;¹
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd ;
Amid the plumage of the crest,
A falcon hover'd on her nest,
With wings outspread, and forward breast ;
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soar'd sable in an azure field :
The golden legend bore aright,
~~Who~~ **Who** checks at me, to death is **Dight**.²
Blue was the charger's broider'd rein ;
Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane ;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

VII.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name, and knightly sires ;
They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim ;
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
And lightly bear the ring away ;

¹ The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury.

² [See Note 4.]

Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe :
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last and trustiest of the four,
On high his forky pennon bore ;
Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazon'd sable, as before,
The towering falcon seem'd to soar.
Last, twenty yeoman, two and two,
In hosen black, and jerkins blue,
With falcons broider'd on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood ;
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send ;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys, and array,
Show'd they had march'd a weary way.

IX.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,
The soldiers of the guard,

With musket, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
 Stood in the Castle-yard ;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
 For welcome-shot prepared :
Enter'd the train, and such a clang,
As then through all his turrets rang,
 Old Norham never heard.

X.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
 The trumpets flourish'd brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
 And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
 The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,
 He scatter'd angels round.
" Welcome to Norham, Marmion !
 Stout heart, and open hand !
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
 Thou flower of English land ! "

XI.

Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
 Stood on the steps of stone,
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
 They hail'd Lord Marmion :
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scivelbaye,

Of Tamworth tower and town ;¹
 And he, their courtesy to requite,
 Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,
 All as he lighted down.
 " Now, largesse, largesse,² Lord Marmion,
 Knight of the crest of gold !
 A blazon'd shield, in battle won,
 Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

XII.

They marshall'd him to the Castle-hall,
 Where the guests stood all aside,
 And loudly flourish'd the trumpet-call,
 And the heralds loudly cried,
 —" Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion
 With the crest and helm of gold !
 Full well we know the trophies won
 In the lists at Cottiswold :
 There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
 'Gainst Marmion's force to stand ;
 To him he lost his lady-love,
 And to the King his land.
 Ourselves beheld the listed field,
 A sight both sad and fair ;
 We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield .
 And saw his saddle bare ;

¹ [See Note 5.]

² This was the cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights.

The heralds, like the minstrels, were a race allowed to have great claims upon the liberality of the knights, of whose feats they kept a record, and proclaimed them aloud, as in the text, upon suitable occasions.

At Berwick, Norham, and other Border fortresses of importance, pursuivants usually resided, whose inviolable character rendered them the only persons that could, with perfect assurance of safety, be sent on necessary embassies into Scotland. This is alluded to in stanza xxi. p. 32.

We saw the victor win the crest,
He wears with worthy pride ;
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed
His foeman's scutcheon tied.
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight !
Room, room, ye genties gay,
For him who conquer'd in the fight,
Marmion of Fontenaye ! ”

XIII.

Then stepp'd, to meet that noble Lord,
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold.
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place—
They feasted full and high :
The whiles a Northern harper rude
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
“ *How the fierce Thirwalls, and Riddleys all,
Stout Willimondswick,
And Hardriding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o' the Wall,
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Deadman's-shaw.* ”
Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook
The harper's barbarous lay ;
Yet much he praised the pains he took,
And well those pains did pay ;
For lady's suit, and minstrel's strain,
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

¹ Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William; for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous Lady Ford, whose siren charms are said to have cost our James IV. so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry

XIV.

"Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
 "Of your fair courtesey,
 I pray you bide some little space
 In this poor tower with me.
 Here may you keep your arms from rust,
 May breathe your war-horse well ;
 Seldom hath pass'd a week but giust
 Or feat of arms befell :
 The Scots can rein a mettled steed ;
 And love to couch a spear ;—
 Saint George ! a stirring life they lead,
 That have such neighbours near.
 Then stay with us a little space,
 Our northern wars to learn ;
 I pray you, for your lady's grace !"
 Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

XV.

The Captain mark'd his alter'd look,
 And gave a squire the sign ;
 A mighty wassell-bowl he took,
 And crown'd it high with wine.
 "Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion :
 But first I pray thee fair,
 Where hast thou left that page of thine,
 That used to serve thy cup of wine,
 Whose beauty was so rare ?
 When last in Raby towers we met,
 The boy I closely eyed,
 And often mark'd his cheeks were wet,
 With tears he fain would hide :

VIII., on account of his share in the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the Court of Scotland was, in fact, living in her own Castle at Ford.—See Sir RICHARD HERON'S curious *Genealogy of the Heron Family*.

His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,
Or saddle battle-steed ;
But meeter seem'd for lady fair,
To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
The slender silk to lead :
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
His bosom—when he sigh'd,
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride !
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
To serve in lady's bower ?
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour ? ”

XVI.

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest ;
He roll'd his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,
Yet made a calm reply :
“ That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair
He might not brook the northern air.
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
I left him sick in Lindisfarn :¹
Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day ?
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrimage ? ”—
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.

¹ [See Note, canto ii, stanza 1, p. 50.]

XVII.

Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt,
Careless the Knight replied,
" No bird, whose feathers gaily flaunt,
Delights in cage to bide :
Norham is grim and grated close,
Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,
And many a darksome tower ;
And better loves my lady bright
To sit in liberty and light,
In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our hand,
Our falcon on our glove ;
But where shall we find leash or band,
For dame that loves to rove ?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing."—

XVIII.

" Nay, if with Royal James's bride
The lovely Lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear ;
For, to the Scottish court address'd,
I journey at our King's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me, and mine, a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.

Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Ayton tower."¹

XIX.

"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow ;
For here be some have prick'd as far,
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar ;
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale ;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods."²

XX.

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
"Were I in warlike wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack,
Than your stout forayers at my back ;
But, as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why through all Scotland, near and far,
Their King is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering Border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
Break out in some unseemly broil :
A herald were my fitting guide ;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide ;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

¹ The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, Duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland ; and James, IV., after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the Lady Catherine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions. To retaliate an invasion of England, Surrey advanced into Berwickshire at the head of considerable forces, but retreated, after taking the inconsiderable fortress of Ayton.

² [See Note 6.]

XXI.

The Captain mused a little space,
 And pass'd his hand across his face.
 —“ Fain would I find the guide you want,
 But ill may spare a pursuivant,
 The only men that safe can ride
 Mine errands on the Scottish side :
 And though a bishop built this fort,
 Few holy brethren here resort ;
 Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
 Since our last siege, we have not seen :
 The mass he might not sing or say,
 Upon one stinted meal a-day ;
 So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
 And pray'd for our success the while.
 Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
 Is all too well in case to ride ;
 The priest of Shoreswood¹—he could rein
 The wildest war-horse in your train ;
 But then, no spearman in the hall
 Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
 Friar John of Tillmouth were the man :
 A blithsome brother at the can,
 A welcome guest in hall and bower,
 He knows each castle, town, and tower,

¹ This churchman seems to have been akin to Welsh, the vicar of St. Thomas of Exeter, a leader among the Cornish insurgents in 1549. “ This man,” says Hollinshed, “ had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set, and mightilie compact : He was a very good wrestler ; shot well, both in the long-bow, and also in the cross-bow ; he handled his hand-gun and peece very well ; he was a very good woodman, and a hardie, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling, or his beard for the washing. He was a companion in any exercise of activitie, and of a courteous and gentle behaviour. He descended of a good honest parentage, being born at Peneverin, in Cornwall ; and yet, in this rebellion, an arch-captain, and a principal doer.”—Vol. iv. p. 958, 4to edition. This model of clerical talents had the misfortune to be hanged upon the steeple of his own church.²

² [The reader needs hardly to be reminded of Ivanhoe.]



SAINT MARY'S LOCH FROM THE LOWES

Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
By lone St. Mary's silent lake.

Marmion, p. 41

From the drawing by J. C. Schetky



DRYHOPE TOWER, SAINT MARY'S LOCH

Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded flower.

Marmion, p. 46

In which the wine and ale is good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,
In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife ;
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know ;
Yet, in your guard, perchance will go."

XXII.

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,
And reverently took up the word.
" Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech,
Can many a game and gambol teach ;
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep at bowls the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
And we can neither hunt, nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,
May end in worse than loss of hood.

Let Friar John, in safety, still
 In chimney-corner snore his fill,
 Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill :
 Last night, to Norham there came one,
 Will better guide Lord Marmion."—
 "Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
 Well hast thou spoke ; say forth thy say."

XXIII.

"Here is a holy Palmer come,
 From Salem first, and last from Rome ;
 One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,
 And visited each holy shrine,
 In Araby and Palestine ;
 On hills of Armenie hath been,
 Where Noah's ark may yet be seen ;
 By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
 Which parted at the prophet's rod ;
 In Sinai's wilderness he saw
 The Mount, where Israel heard the law,
 'Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
 And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
 He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,
 Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell ;
 And of that Grot where Olives nod,
 Where, darling of each heart and eye,
 From all the youth of Sicily,
 Saint Rosalie retired to God.¹

XXIV.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,
 Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
 Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,
 For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.
 He knows the passes of the North,
 And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth ;

¹[See Note 7.]

Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the stream or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale ;
But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,
As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

XXV.

"Gramercy !" quoth Lord Marmion,
"Full loath were I, that Friar John,
That venerable man, for me,
Were placed in fear or jeopardy.
If this same Palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
Instead of cockle-shell, or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy rambles ; still
They know to charm a weary hill,
With song, romance, or lay ;
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way."—

XXVI.

"Ah ! noble sir," young Selby said
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listen'd at his cell ;
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,

He murmur'd on till morn, howe'er
 No living mortal could be near.
 Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
 As other voices spoke again.
 I cannot tell—I like it not—
 Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
 No conscience clear, and void of wrong,
 Can rest awake, and pray so long.
 Himself still sleeps before his beads
 Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds."¹

XXVII.

—"Let pass," quoth Marmion; "by my fay,
 This man shall guide me on my way,
 Although the great arch-fiend and he
 Had sworn themselves of company.
 So please you, gentle youth, to call
 This Palmer² to the Castle-hall."
 The summon'd Palmer came in place;
 His sable cowl o'erhung his face;
 In his black mantle was he clad,
 With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
 On his broad shoulders wrought;
 The scallop shell his cap did deck;
 The crucifix around his neck
 Was from Loretto brought;

¹ Friar John understood the soporific virtue of his beads and breviary, as well as his namesake in Rabelais. "But Gargantua could not sleep by any means, on which side soever he turned himself. Whereupon the monk said to him, 'I never sleep soundly but when I am at sermon or prayers: Let us therefore begin, you and I, the seven penitential psalms, to try whether you shall not quickly fall asleep.' The conceit pleased Gargantua very well; and, beginning the first of these psalms, as soon as they came to *Beati quorum*, they fell asleep, both the one and the other."

² A *Palmer*, opposed to a *Pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the *Pilgrim* retired to his usual home and occupations, when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage. The *Palmer*s seem to have been the *Questionarii* of the ancient Scottish canons 1242 and 1296. There is in the Bannatyne MS. a burlesque account of two such persons, entitled, "Simmy and his Brother."

His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore ;
The faded palm-branch in his hand
Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII.

When as the Palmer came in hall,
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
Or look'd more high and keen ;
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil ;
His cheek was sunk, alas the while !
And when he struggled at a smile,
His eye look'd haggard wild :
Poor wretch ! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face, and sun-burn'd hair,
She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
Soon change the form that best we know—
For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair ;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,
And want can quench the eye's bright grace,
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor Palmer knew them all.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask ;
The Palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,
To Scottish court to be his guide.
“ But I have solemn vows to pay,
And may not linger by the way,
To fair St. Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound ;¹
Then to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore :²
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
Could back to peace my bosom bring,
Or bid it throb no more ! ”

XXX.

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
Where wine and spices richly steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
The Captain pledged his noble guest,
The cup went through among the rest,
Who drain'd it merrily ;
Alone the Palmer pass'd it by,
Though Selby press'd him courteously.
This was a sign the feast was o'er ;
It hush'd the merry wassel roar,
The minstrels ceased to sound.

¹ [See Note 8.]² [See Note 8.]

Soon in the castle nought was heard,
But the slow footstep of the guard,
Pacing his sober round.

XXXI.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose ;
And first the chapel doors unclosed ;
Then, after morning rites were done,
(A hasty mass from Friar John,)
And knight and squire had broke their fast,
On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse :
Then came the stirrup-cup in course :
Between the Baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost ;
High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
Solemn excuse the Captain made,
Till, filing from the gate, had pass'd
That noble train, their Lord the last.
Then loudly rung the trumpet call ;
Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,
And shook the Scottish shore ;
Around the castle eddied slow,
Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
And hid its turrets hoar ;
Till they rolled forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

M A R M I O N.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND.

TO THE

REV. JOHN MARRIOTT, A.M.

Ashestiel, Eltrick Forest.

THE scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair,¹
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon Thorn—perchance whose prickly spears
Have fenced him for three hundred years,
While fell around his green compeers—
Yon lonely Thorn, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough ;
Would he could tell how deep the shade
A thousand mingled branches made ;
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan² to the rock,
And through the foliage showed his head,
With narrow leaves and berries red ;
What pines on every mountain sprung,
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook !

¹ [See Note 9.]

² Mountain-ash.

“ Here, in my shade,” methinks he’d say,
“ The mighty stag at noon-tide lay :
The wolf I’ve seen, a fiercer game,
(The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)
With lurching step around me prowl,
And stop, against the moon to howl ;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would whet ;
While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by, through gay green-wood.
Then oft, from Newark’s¹ riven tower,
Sallied a Scottish monarch’s power :
A thousand vassals muster’d round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound ;
And I might see the youth intent,
Guard every pass with crossbow bent ;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falc’ners hold the ready hawk ;
And foresters, in green-wood trim,
Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,
Attentive, as the bracket’s² bay
From the dark covert drove the prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant greyhounds strain ;
Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below ;
While all the rocking hills reply,
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters’ cry,
And bungles ringing lightsomely.”

Of such proud huntings, many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow
Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.

¹ See Notes to the Lay of the Last Minstrel.

² Slow-hound.

But not more blithe that silvan court,
Than we have been at humbler sport ;
Though small our pomp, and mean our game.
Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same.
Remember'st thou my greyhounds true ?
O'er holt or hill there never flew,
From slid or leash there never sprang,
More fleet of foot, or sure of fang.
Nor dull, between each merry chase,
Pass'd by the intermitted space ;
For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic and in Gothic lore :
We mark'd each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between ;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now—for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill !¹
No longer, from thy mountains dun,
The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
And while his honest heart glows warm,
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, " The Chieftain of the Hills !"
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw
By moonlight dance on Carterbaugh ;
No youthful Baron's left to grace
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chase,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon :²

¹ [A seat of the Duke of Buccleuch on the Yarrow, in Ettrick Forest. See Notes to the Lay of the Last Minstrel.]

² [Mr. Marriott was governor to the young nobleman here alluded to, George Henry, Lord Scott, son to Charles, Earl of Dalkeith (afterwards Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry,) who died early, in 1808.]

And she is gone, whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace ;
Though if to Sylphid Queen 'twere given,
To show our earth the charms of Heaven,
She could not glide along the air,
With form more light, or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafen'd ear
Grows quick that lady's step to hear :
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot ;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal ;
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they're fed.

From Yair,—which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil,—
Her long-descended lord¹ is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.
And much I miss those sportive boys,²
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
Close to my side, with what delight
They press'd to hear of Wallace wight,
When, pointing to his airy mound,
I call'd his ramparts holy ground !³
Kindled their brows to hear me speak ;
And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,

¹ [The late Alexander Pringle, Esq., of Whytbank—whose beautiful seat of the Yair stands on the Tweed, about two miles below Ashiestiel, the then residence of the poet.]

² [The sons of Mr. Pringle of Whytbank.]

³ There is, on a high mountainous ridge above the farm of Ashiestiel, a fosse called Wallace's Trench.

Despite the difference of our years,
 Return again the glow of theirs.
 Ah, happy boys ! such feelings pure,
 They will not, cannot, long endure ;
 Condemn'd to stem the world's rude tide,
 You may not linger by the side ;
 For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,
 And passion ply the sail and oar.
 Yet cherish the remembrance still,
 Of the lone mountain, and the rill ;
 For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
 When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
 And you will think right frequently,
 But, well I hope, without a sigh,
 On the free hours that we have spent,
 Together, on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions gone,
 We doubly feel ourselves alone,
 Something, my friend, we yet may gain,
 There is a pleasure in this pain :
 It soothes the love of lonely rest,
 Deep in each gentler heart impress'd.
 'Tis silent amid worldly toils,
 And stifled soon by mental broils ;
 But, in a bosom thus prepared,
 Its still small voice is often heard,
 Whispering a mingled sentiment,
 'Twixt resignation and content.
 Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
 By lone Saint Mary's silent lake ;¹

¹ This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. In the winter, it is still frequented by flights of wild swans ; hence my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines ;—

" The swan on Sweet St. Mary's lake
 Floats double, swan and shadow."

Near the lower extremity of the lake are the ruins of Dryhope tower, the

Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge ;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink ;
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view ;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor hush, nor brake, is there,
Save where, of land, yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
Yet even this nakedness has power,
And aids the feeling of the hour :
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
Where living thing conceal'd might lie ;
Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell ;
There's nothing left to fancy's guess
You see that all is loneliness :
And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills ;
In summer tide, so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep ;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.

Naught living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near ;

birth-place of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow. She was married to Walter Scott of Harden, no less renowned for his depredations, than his bride for her beauty. Her romantic appellation was, in latter days, with equal justice, conferred on Miss Mary Lillias Scott, the last of the elder branch of the Harden family. The author well remembers the talent and spirit of the latter Flower of Yarrow, though age had then injured the charms which procured her the name,

For though, in feudal strife, a foe
 Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,¹
 Yet still, beneath the hallow'd soil,
 The peasant rests him from his toil,
 And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
 Where erst his simple fathers pray'd.

If age had tamed the passions' strife,
 And fate had cut my ties to life,
 Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell,
 And rear again the chaplain's cell,
 Like that same peaceful hermitage,
 Where Milton long'd to spend his age.
 'Twere sweet to mark the setting day,
 On Bourhope's lonely top decay ;
 And, as it faint and feeble died
 On the broad lake, and mountain's side,
 To say, " Thus pleasures fade away ;
 Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
 And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey ;"
 Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,
 And think on Yarrow's faded Flower :
 And when that mountain-sound I heard,
 Which bids us be for storm prepared,
 The distant rustling of his wings,
 As up his force the Tempest brings,
 'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,
 To sit upon the Wizard's grave ;

¹ The chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes (*de lacubus*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns ; but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced ; but the burial ground is still used as a cemetery. A funeral, in a spot so very retired, has an uncommonly striking effect. The vestiges of the chaplain's house are yet visible. Being in a high situation, it commanded a full view of the lake, with the opposite mountain of Bourhope, belonging, with the lake itself, to Lord Napier. On the left hand is the tower of Dryhope, mentioned in a preceding note

That Wizard Priest's, whose bones are thrust.
From company of holy dust ;¹
On which no sunbeam ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines)—
Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore ;
And mark the wild-swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave :
Then, when against the driving hail
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire ;
There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had ail its sway,
And, in the bitter's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the Wizard Priest was come,
To claim again his ancient home !
And bade my busy fancy range,
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I clear'd,
And smiled to think that I had fear'd.

But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life,
(Though but escape from fortune's strife,)
Something most matchless good and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice ;
And deem each hour, to musing given,
A step upon the road to heaven.

¹ At one corner of the burial ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts, is a small mound, called *Binram's Corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry. His story much resembles that of Ambrosio in "The Monk," and has been made the theme of a ballad, by my friend Mr. James Hogg, more poetically designed the *Eltrick Shepherd*. To his volume, entitled "The Mountain Bard," which contains this, and many other legendary stories and ballads of great merit, I refer the curious reader.

Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease,
 Such peaceful solitudes displease :
 He loves to drown his bosom's jar
 Amid the elemental war :
 And my black Palmer's choice had been
 Some ruder and more savage scene,
 Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.¹
 There eagles scream from isle to shore ;
 Down all the rocks the torrents roar ;
 O'er the black waves incessant driven,
 Dark mists infect the summer heaven ;
 Through the rude barriers of the lake,
 Away its hurrying waters break,
 Faster and whiter dash and curl,
 Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
 Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
 Thunders the viewless stream below,
 Diving, as if condemn'd to lave
 Some demon's subterranean cave,
 Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,
 Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.
 And well that Palmer's form and mien
 Had suited with the stormy scene,
 Just on the edge, straining his ken
 To view the bottom of the den,
 Where, deep deep down, and far within,
 Toils with the rocks the roaring linn ;
 Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
 And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,

1 Loch-skene is a mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of the Moffat-water. The character of the scenery is uncommonly savage ; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Loch-skene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height, and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the "Grey Mare's Tail." The "Giant's Grave," afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery, designed to command the pass.

White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.

Marriott, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung :
Then list to me, and thou shalt know,
Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

MARMION.

CANTO SECOND.

The Convent.

I.

THE breeze, which swept away the smoke,
Round Norham Castle roll'd,
When all the loud artillery spoke,
With lightning-flash, and thunder-stroke,
As Marmion left the Hold.
It curl'd not Tweed alone, that breeze,
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
It freshly blew, and strong,
"Where, from high Whitby's cloister'd pile,
Bound to St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle,"¹
It bore a bark along.
Upon the gale she stoop'd her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home ;

¹ The Abbey of Whitby, in the Archdeaconry of Cleveland, on the coast of Yorkshire, was founded A.D. 657, in consequence of a vow of Oswy, King of Northumberland. It contained both monks and nuns of the Benedictine order ; but, contrary to what was usual in such establishments, the abbess was superior to the abbot. The monastery was afterwards ruined by the Danes, and rebuilt by William Percy, in the reign of the Conqueror. There were no nuns there in Henry the Eighth's time, nor long before it. The ruins of Whitby Abbey are very magnificent.

Lindisfarne, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the episcopal seat of the see of Durham during the early ages of British Christianity. A succession of holy men held that office : but their

The merry seamen laugh'd, to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
 Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joy'd they in their honour'd freight ;
For, on the deck, in chair of state,
The Abbess of St. Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns the galley graced.

II.

'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to greenwood shades,
 Their first flight from the cage,
How timid and how curious too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view,
 Their wonderment engage.
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
 With many a benedicite ;
One at the rippling surge grew pale,
 And would for terror pray,
Then shriek'd, because the sea-dog, nigh,
His round black head, and sparkling eye,
 Rear'd o'er the foaming spray ;
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disorder'd by the summer gale,

merits were swallowed up in the superior fame of St. Cuthbert, who was sixth bishop of Durham, and who bestowed the name of his "patrimony" upon the extensive property of the see. The ruins of the monastery upon Holy Island betoken great antiquity. The arches are, in general, strictly Saxon ; and the pillars which support them, short, strong, and massy. In some places, however, there are pointed windows, which indicate that the building has been repaired at a period long subsequent to the original foundation. The exterior ornaments of the building, being of a light sandy stone, have been wasted, as described in the text. Lindisfarne is not properly an island, but rather, as the venerable Bede has termed it, a semi-isle ; for, although surrounded by the sea at full tide, the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the opposite coast of Northumberland, from which it is about three miles distant.

Perchance lest some more worldly eye
Her dedicated charms might spy ;
Perchance because such action graced
Her fair-turn'd arm and slender waist.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share,-
The Abbess, and the Novice Clare.

III.

The Abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Fair too she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
For her a timid lover sigh,
Nor knew the influence of her eye.
Love, to her ear, was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame ;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister wall :
The deadliest sin her mind could reach,
Was of monastic rule the breach ;
And her ambition's highest aim
To emulate St. Hilda's fame.
For this she gave her ample dower,
To raise the convent's eastern tower :
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She deck'd the chapel of the saint,
And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
With ivory and gems emboss'd.
The poor her convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
Reform'd on Benedictine school ;
Her cheek was pale, her form was spare ;
Vigils and penitence austere,
Had early quench'd the light of youth,
But gentle was the dame, in sooth ;
Though vain of her religious sway,
She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their Abbess well.
Sad was this voyage to the dame ;
Summon'd to Lindisfarne, she came,
There, with St. Cuthbert's Abbot old,
And Tynemouth's Prioress to hold
A chapter of Saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict,
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to death.

V.

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair ;
As yet a novice unprofess'd,
Lovely and gentle, but distress'd.
She was betroth'd to one now dead,
Or worse, who had dishonour'd fled.
Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
To one who loved her for her land :
Herself, almost heart-broken now,
Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud, within St. Hilda's gloom,
Her blasted hopes and wither'd bloom.

VI.

She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seem'd to mark the waves below ;
Nay, seem'd, so fix'd her look and eye,
To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
Far other scene her thoughts recall,—
A sun-scorch'd desert, waste and bare,
Nor waves, nor breezes, murmur'd there ;
There saw she, wher some careless hand
O'er a dead corpse had heap'd the sand,
To hide it till the jackals come,
To tear it from the scanty tomb.—
See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to heaven !

VII.

Lovely, and gentle, and distress'd—
These charms might tame the fiercest breast ;
Harpers have sung, and poets told,
That he, in fury uncontroll'd,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood.
But passions in the human frame,
Oft put the lion's rage to shame :
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised, with their bowl and knife,
Against the mourner's harmless life.
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prison'd in Cuthbert's islet grey.

VIII.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland;
Towns, towers, and halls, successive rise,
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall
Of lofty Seaton-Delaval;
They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck flood;
Rush to the sea through sounding woods;
They pass'd the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son;
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who own'd the cell:
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next, they crossed themselves to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar,
On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore;
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reach'd the Holy Island's bay.

IX.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;

Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The castle with its battled walls,
The ancient Monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

X.

In Saxon strength that Abbey frown'd,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate row and row,
On ponderous columns short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain ;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourg'd by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilt in a later style,
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been ;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And moulder'd in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power ;
The pointed angles of each tower ;
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

XI.

Soon as they near'd his turrets strong,
The maidens raised St. Hilda's song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind,
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined
And made harmonious close ;
Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drown'd amid the breakers' roar,
According chorus rose :
Down to the haven of the Isle,
The monks and nuns in order file,
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;
Banner, and cross, and relics there,
To meet St. Hilda's maids they bare ;
And, as they caught the sounds on air,
They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders, in joyous mood,
Rushed emulously through the flood,
To hale the bark to land ;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
And bless'd them with her hand.

XII.

Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the Convent banquet made :
All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,
The stranger sisters roam :
Till fell the evening damp with dew,
And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
For there, even summer night is chill.
Then, having stray'd and gazed their fill,

They closed around the fire ;
 And all, in turn, essay'd to paint
 The rival merits of their saint,
 A theme that ne'er can tire
 A holy maid ; for, be it known,
 That their saint's honour is their own.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
 How to their house three Barons bold
 Must menial service do ;¹
 While horns blow out a note of shame,
 And monks cry " Fye upon your name !
 In wrath, for loss of silvan game,
 Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."—
 " This, on Ascension-day, each year,
 While labouring on our harbour-pier,
 Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."—
 They told, how in their convent cell
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,
 The lovely Edeltilde ;²
 And how, of thousand snakes, each one
 Was changed into a coil of stone,
 When holy Hilda pray'd ;
 Themselves, within their holy bound,
 Their stony folds had often found.
 They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
 As over Whitby's towers they sail,³
 And sinking down, with flutterings faint,
 They do their homage to the saint.

¹ [See Note 10.]

² She was the daughter of King Oswy, who, in gratitude to Heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against Penda, the pagan King of Mercia, dedicated Edeltilde, then but a year old, to the service of God, in the monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

³ These two miracles are much insisted upon by all ancient writers, who have occasion to mention either Whitby or St. Hilda. The relics of the

XIV.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail,
To vie with these in holy tale ;
His body's resting-place, of old.
How oft their patron changed, they told ;¹
How, when the rude Dane burn'd their pile,
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle ;
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
They rested them in fair Melrose ;
But though, alive, he loved it well,
Not there his relics might repose ;
For, wondrous tale to tell !
In his stone-coffin forth he rides
A ponderous bark for river tides,
Yet light as gossamer it glides,
Downward to Tilmouth cell.
Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint repair ;
Chester-le-Street, and Rippon, saw
His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw
Hail'd him with joy and fear ;
And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last,
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear :
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
His relics are in secret laid ;

snakes which infested the precincts of the convent, and were, at the abbess's prayer, not only beheaded, but petrified, are still found about the rocks, and are termed by Protestant fossilists, *Ammonites*.

Mr. Charlton, in his *History of Whitby*, points out the true origin of the other miracle, from the number of sea gulls that, when flying from a storm, often alight near Whitby; and from the woodcocks, and other birds of passage, who do the same upon their arrival on shore, after a long flight.

¹ [See Note II.]

But none may know the place,
 Save of his holiest servants three,
 Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
 Who share that wondrous grace.

XV.

Who may his miracles declare !
 Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir,
 (Although with them they led
 Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
 And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,
 And the bold men of Teviotdale,)

Before his standard fled.¹
 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
 Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
 And turn'd the Conqueror back again,²
 When, with his Norman bowyer band,
 He came to waste Northumberland.

¹ Every one has heard, that when David I., with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136, the English host marched against them under the holy banner of St. Cuthbert; to the efficacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cuton-moor. The conquerors were at least as much indebted to the jealousy and intractability of the different tribes who composed David's army; among whom, as mentioned in the text, were the Galwegians, the Britons of Strath-Clyde, the men of Teviotdale and Lothian, with many Norman and German warriors, who asserted the cause of the Empress Maud. See CHALMERS' *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 622.

² Cuthbert, we have seen, had no great reason to spare the Danes, when opportunity offered. Accordingly, I find, in Simeon of Durham, that the Saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glastonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies; a consolation, which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashdown, rewarded, by a royal offering at the shrine of the Saint. As to William the Conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the Saint. It was however, replaced before William left the north; and, to balance accounts, the Conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the Saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that, notwithstanding there was a sumptuous dinner prepared for him, he fled without eating a morsel (which the monkish historian seems to have thought no small part both of the miracle and the penance), and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

XVI.

But fain St. Hilda's nuns would learn
If, on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name : ¹
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
And hear his anvil sound ;
A deaden'd clang,—a huge din form,
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm
And night were closing round.
But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

XVII.

While round the fire such legends go,
Far different was the scene of woe,
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.
It was more dark and lone that vault,
Than the worst dungeon cell :
Old Colwulf ² built it, for his fault,
In penitance to dwell,
When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
The Saxon battle-axe and crown.
This den, which, chilling every sense
Of feeling, hearing, sight,
Was call'd the Vault of Penitence,
Excluding air and light,

¹ Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *Entrochi* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St. Cuthbert's Beads. While at this task, he is supposed to sit during the night upon a certain rock, and use another as his anvil. This story was perhaps credited in former days ; at least the Saint's legend contains some not more probable.

² [See Note 12.]

Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
 A place of burial for such dead,
 As, having died in mortal sin,
 Might not be laid the church within.
 'Twas now a place of punishment ;
 Whence if so loud a shriek were sent,
 As reach'd the upper air,
 The hearers bless'd themselves, and said,
 The spirits of the sinful dead
 Bemoan'd their torments there.

XVIII.

But though, in the monastic pile,
 Did of this penitential aisle
 Some vague tradition go,
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew
 Where the place lay ; and still more few
 Were those, who had from him the clew
 To that dread vault to go.
 Victim and executioner
 Were blindfold when transported there.
 In low dark rounds the arches hung,
 From the rude rock the side-walls sprung ;
 The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
 Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
 Were all the pavement of the floor ;
 The mildew-drops fell one by one,
 With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
 A cresset,¹ in an iron chain,
 Which served to light this drear domain,
 With damp and darkness seem'd to strive,
 As if it scarce might keep alive ;
 And yet it dimly served to show
 The awful conclave met below.

[Antique chandelier.]

XIX.

There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents three :
All servants of Saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose order strict
On iron table lay ;
In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown
By the pale cresset's ray :
The Abbess of Saint Hilda's, there,
Sat for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,
She closely drew her veil :
Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress,
Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,¹
And she with awe looks pale :
And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight
Has long been quench'd by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace, is shown,
Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style ;
For sanctity call'd, through the isle,
The Saint of Lindisfarne.

XX.

Before them stood a guilty pair,
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied ;
The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.

¹ [See Note 13.]

Her cap down o'er her face she drew
And, on her doublet breast,
She tried to hide the badge of blue,
Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the Prioress' command,
A Monk undid the silken band,
That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,
And down her slender form they spread,
In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister profess'd of Fontevraud,
Whom the church number'd with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.

XXI.

When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear
To those bright ringlets glistening fair,)
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy ;
And there she stood so calm and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax
Wrought to the very life, was there ;
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed ;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed ;



WHITBY ABBEY

High Whitby's cloister'd pile,
Marmion, p. 70
From the drawing by Peter de Wist

One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the Tempter ever needs,
To do the savagest of deeds ;
For them no vision'd terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt,
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death,—alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash ;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII.

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror speak !
For there were seen in that dark wall,
Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall ;—
Who enters at such grisly door,
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread ;
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless ;
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Show'd the grim entrance of the porch :
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were display'd,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV.

These executioners were chose,
 As men who were with mankind foes,
 And with despite and envy fired,
 Into the cloister had retired ;
 Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
 Strove, by deep penance, to efface
 Of some foul crime the stain ;
 For, as the vassals of her will,
 Such men the Church selected still,
 As either joy'd in doing ill,
 Or thought more grace to gain,
 If, in her cause, they wrestled down
 Feelings their nature strove to own.
 By strange device were they brought there,
 They knew not how, nor knew not where.

XXV.

And now that blind old Abbot rose,
 To speak the Chapter's doom,
 On those the wall was to enclose,
 Alive, within the tomb ;¹
 But stopp'd, because that woful Maid,
 Gathering her powers, to speak essay'd.
 Twice she essay'd, and twice in vain ;
 Her accents might no utterance gain ;
 Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
 From her convulsed and quivering lip ;
 "Twixt each attempt all was so still,

¹ It is well known, that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent ; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it, and the awful words, *VADE IN PACE*, were the signal for immuring the criminal. It is not likely that, in latter times, this punishment was often resorted to ; but, among the ruins of the abbey of Coldingham, were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which from the shape of the niche, and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

You seem'd to hear a distant rill—
'Twas ocean's swells and falls ;
For though this vault of sin and fear,
Was to the sounding surge so near,
A tempest there you scarce could hear,
So massive were the walls.

XXVI.

At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart,
And light came to her eye,
And colour dawn'd upon her cheek,
A hectic and a flutter'd streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot peak,
By Autumn's stormy sky ;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gather'd strength,
And arm'd herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy,
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII.

"I speak not to implore your grace,
Well know I, for one minute's space
Successless might I sue :
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain ;
For if a death of lingering pain,
To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,
Vain are your masses too.—
I listen'd to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil ;
For three long years I bow'd my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride ;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,

All here, and all beyond the grave.—
 He saw young Clara's face more fair,
 He knew her of broad lands the heir,
 Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
 And Constance was beloved no more.—

'Tis an old tale, and often told
 But did my fate and wish agree,
 Ne'er had been read, in story old,
 Of maiden true betray'd for gold,
 That loved, or was avenged, like me !

XXVIII.

'The King approved his favourite's aim ;
 In vain a rival barr'd his claim,
 Whose fate with Clare's was plight,
 For he attaints that rival's fame
 With treason's charge—and on they came,
 In mortal lists to fight.
 Their oaths are said,
 Their prayers are pray'd,
 Their lances in the rest are laid,
 They meet in mortal shock ;
 And, hark ! the throng, with thundering cry,
 Shout ' Marmion, Marmion ! to the sky,
 De Wilton to the block ! '
 Say ye, who preach Heaven shall decide
 When in the lists two champions ride,
 Say, was Heaven's justice here ?
 When, loyal in his love and faith,
 Wilton found overthrow or death,
 Beneath a traitor's spear ?
 How false the charge, how true he fell,
 This guilty packet best can tell."—
 Then drew a packet from her breast,
 Paused, gather'd voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX.

“ Still was false Marmion’s bridal staid,
To Whitby’s convent fled the maid,
The hated march to shun.
‘ Ho ! shifts she thus ? ’ King Henry cried,
‘ Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun.’
One way remain’d—the King’s command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land :
I linger’d here, and rescue plann’d
For Clara and for me :
This caitiff Monk, for gold, did swear,
He would to Whitby’s shrine repair,
And, by his drugs, my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be.
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice has undone us both.

XXX.

“ And now my tongue the secret tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion.
Had fortune my last hope betray’d,
This packet, to the King convey’d,
Had given him to the headman’s stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke.—
Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still ;
And come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI.

“ Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome !

If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
 Full soon such vengeance will he take.
 That you shall wish the fiery Dane
 Had rather been your guest again.
 Behind, a darker hour ascends !
 The altars quake, the crosier bends,
 The ire of a despotic King
 Rides forth upon destruction's wing
 Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep
 Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep ;
 Some traveller then shall find my bones
 Whitening amid disjointed stones,
 And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
 Marvel such relics here should be.

XXXII.

Fix'd was her look, and stern her air :
 Back from her shoulders stream'd her hair ;
 The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
 Stared up erectly from her head ;
 Her figure seem'd to rise more high ;
 Her voice, despair's wild energy
 Had given a tone of prophecy.
 Appall'd the astonished conclave sate ;
 With stupid eyes, the men of fate
 Gazed on the light inspired form,
 And listen'd for the avenging storm ;
 The judges felt the victim's dread ;
 No hand was moved, no word was said,
 Till thus the Abbot's doom was given,
 Raising his sightless balls to heaven :—
 " Sister, let thy sorrows cease ;
 Sinful brother, part in peace ! " ¹

¹ [See Note on Stanza xxv. *ante* p. 66.]

From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,
Paced forth the judges three ;
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
The butcher-work that there befell,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.

XXXIII.

An hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day ;
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan :
With speed their upward way they take,
(Such speed as age and fear can make,)
And cross'd themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on :
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone,
They seem'd to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung ;
To Warkworth cell the echoes roll'd,
His beads the wakeful hermit told,
The Bamborough peasant raised his head
But slept ere half a prayer he said ;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then couch'd him down beside the hind
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound, so dull and stern.

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

TO

WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashetiel, Ettrick Forest.

LIKE April morning clouds, that pass,
With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
And imitate, on field and furrow,
Life's chequer'd scene of joy and sorrow ;
Like streamlet of the mountain north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the plain ;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast,
When the ear deems its murmur past ;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
Of Light and Shade's inconstant race ;

¹ [William Erskine, Esq. advocate, Sheriff-depute of the Orkneys, became a Judge of the Court of Session by the title of Lord Kinnedder, and died at Edinburgh in August, 1822. He had been from early youth the most intimate of the Poet's friends, and his chief confidant and adviser as to all literary matters. See a notice of his life and character by the late Mr. Hay Donaldson, to which Sir Walter Scott contributed several paragraphs.—
ED.]

Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular ;
And pleased, we listen as the breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees ;
Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my Tale !

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
I love the license all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
To raise the desultory song ?—
Oft, when mid such capricious chime,
Some transient fit of lofty rhyme
To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse
For many an error of the muse,
Oft hast thou said, " If, still mis-spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent,
Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source ;
Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb
Immortal laurels ever bloom :
Instructive of the feebler bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard ;
From them, and from the paths they show'd,
Choose honour'd guide and practised road ;
Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous days.

" Or deem'st thou not our later time
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme ?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For Brunswick's venerable hearse ?
What ! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty ?—
Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivalled light, sublime,—

Though martial Austria, and though all
 The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
 Though banded Europe stood her foes—
 The star of Brandenburg arose !
 Thou couldst not live to see her beam
 For ever quench'd in Jena's stream.
 Lamented Chief !—it was not given
 To thee to change the doom of Heaven,
 And crush that dragon in its birth,
 Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
 Lamented Chief !—not thine the power,
 To save in that presumptuous hour,
 When Prussia hurried to the field,
 And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield !
 Valour and skill 'twas thine to try, ,
 And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
 Ill had it seemed thy silver hair
 The last, the bitterest pang to share,
 For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,
 And birthrights to usurpers given ;
 Thy land's, thy children's wrongs to feel,
 And witness woes thou couldst not heal !
 On thee relenting Heaven bestows
 For honoured life an honour'd close ;
 And when revolves, in time's sure change,
 The hour of Germany's revenge,
 When, breathing fury for her sake,
 Some new Arminius shall awake,
 Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
 To whet his sword on BRUNSWICK'S tomb.

“ Or of the Red-cross hero¹ teach
 Dauntless in dungeon as on breach :
 Alike to him the sea, the shore,
 The brand, the bridle, or the oar :

¹ [Sir Sidney Smith.]

Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the shatter'd walls,
Which the grim Turk, besmear'd with blood,
Against the Invincible made good ;
Or that, whose thundering voice could wake
The silence of the polar lake,
When stubborn Russ, and metal'd Swede,
On the warp'd wave their death-game play'd ;
Or that, where Vengeance and Affright
Howl'd round the father of the fight,
Who snatch'd, on Alexandria's sand,
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand. ¹

“Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung
From the wild harp, which silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er ;
When she, the bold Enchantress,² came,
With fearless hand and heart on flame !
From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again.”

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,
With praises not to me belonging,
In task more meet for mightiest powers,
Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.
But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd
That secret power by all obey'd,

Marmion.

Which warps not less the passive mind,
Its source conceal'd or undefined ;
Whether an impulse, that has birth
Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours ;
Or whether fitlier term'd the sway
Of habit, form'd in early day ?
Howe'er derived, its force confest
Rules with despotic sway the breast,
And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain.
Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
He seeks not eager to inhale
The freshness of the mountain gale,
Content to rear his whiten'd wall
Beside the dank and dull canal ?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree.
Or see yon weatherbeaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak ;
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows ;
Ask, if it would content him well,
At ease in those gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between ?
No ! not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range ;
Not for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis grey, and Garry's lake,

Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time ;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song ;
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale ;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed ;
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loviest green ;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round survey'd ;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower¹
The mightiest work of human power ;
And marvell'd as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spur'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant cheviots blue,

¹ [Smailholm Tower, in Berwickshire, the scene of the Author's infancy, is situated about two miles from Dryburgh Abbey.]

And, home returning, fill'd the hall
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang,
The gateway's broken arches rang ;
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms ;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold ;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretch'd at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war display'd ;
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
Anew, each kind familiar face,
That brighten'd at our evening fire !
From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd Sire,¹
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood ;
Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Show'd what in youth its glance had been ;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,

¹ [Robert Scott of Sandyknows, the grandfather of the Poet.]

Content with equity unbought ;¹
To him the venerable Priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint ;
Alas ! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke :
For i was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child ;
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
The classic poet's well-conn'd task ?
Nay, Erskine, nay—On the wild hill
Let the wild heath-bell flourish still ;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine,
And leave untrimm'd the eglantine :
Nay, my friend, nay—Since oft thy praise
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays ;
Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flatten'd thought, or cumbrous line ;
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend.
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrain'd, my Tale !

¹ Upon revising the Poem, it seems proper to mention that the lines,
" Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought : "

have been unconsciously borrowed from a passage in Dryden's beautiful epistle to John Driden of Chesterton.—1808. *Note to Second Edit.*

² 'The reverend gentleman alluded to was Mr. John Martin, Minister of Mertoun, in which parish Smailholm Tower is situated.]

M A R M I O N.

CANTO THIRD.

The Hostel, or Inn.

I.

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode :
The mountain path the Palmer show'd
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their way.
Oft on the trampling band, from crown
Of some tall cliff, the deer looked down ;
On wing of jet, from his repose
In the deep heath, the black-cock rose ;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow ;
And when the stony path began,
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been passed before
They gain'd the height of Lammermoor ;¹

¹ [See Notes to "The Bride of Lammermoor" Waverley Novels, Paterson's "Edinburgh" Edition, vol. 8.]

Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them, at the close of day,
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.¹

II.

No summons calls them to the tower
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the Lord was gone ;
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to unclose,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
On through the hamlet as they paced,
Before a porch, whose front was graced
With bush and flagon trimly placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein :
The village inn seemed large though rude ;²
Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung ;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall :
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

III.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze ;
Might see, where, in dark nook aloof,
The rafters of the sooty roof

¹ [The village of Gifford lies about four miles from Haddington ; close to it is Yester House, the seat of the Marquis of Tweeddale, and a little farther up the stream, which descends from the hills of Lammermoor, are the remains of the old castle of the family.]

² [See Note 14.]

Bore wealth of winter cheer ;
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savoury haunch of deer.
The chimney arch projected wide ;
Above, around it, and beside,
Were tools for housewives' hand ;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And view'd around the blazing hearth.
His followers mix in noisy mirth ;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside,
Full actively their host supplied.

IV

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest ;
And oft Lord Marmion deign'd to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made ;
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,
Yet, train'd in camps, he knew the art
To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May ;
With open hand, and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy ;
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower :—
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood ;
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fix'd on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
Strove by a frown to quell ;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The Palmer's visage fell.

VI.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud ;
For still, as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whisper'd forth his mind :—
“ Saint Mary ! saw'st thou e'er such sight ?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light
Glances beneath his cowl !
Full on our Lord he sets his eye ;
For his best palfrey, would not I
Endure that sullen scowl.”

VII.

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quell'd their hearts, who saw
The ever-varying fire-light show
That figure stern and face of woe,

Now call'd upon a squire :—
“Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away ?
We slumber by the fire.”—

VIII.

“So please you,” thus the youth rejoin'd,
“Our choicest minstrel's left behind.
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustom'd Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike ;
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush,
No nightingale her love-lorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavish'd on rocks, and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay.”

IX.

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad ;
Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer,
On Lowland plains, the ripen'd ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song :
Oft have I listen'd, and stood still,
As it came soften'd up the hill,

And deem'd it the lament of men
Who languish'd for their native glen ;
And thought how sad would be such sound,
On Susquehana's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumber'd brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
Recall'd fair Scotland's hills again !

X.

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever ?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving ;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving ;
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never !

/

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never !

XI.

Where shall the traitor rest,
 He, the deceiver,
 Who could win maiden's breast,
 Ruin, and leave her ?
 In the lost battle,
 Borne down by the flying,
 Where mingles war's rattle
 With groans of the dying.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
 O'er the false-hearted ;
 His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
 Ere life be parted.
 Shame and dishonour sit
 By his grave ever ;
 Blessing shall hallow it,—
 Never, O never !

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never !

XII.

It ceased, the melancholy sound ;
 And silence sunk on all around.
 The air was sad ; but sadder still
 It fell on Marmion's ear,
 And plain'd as if disgrace and ill,
 And shameful death, were near.
 He drew his mantle past his face,
 Between it and the band,
 And rested with his head a space,
 * Reclining on his hand.

His thoughts I scan not ; but I ween,
That, could their import have been seen,
The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wish'd to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII.

High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse !
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have,
Thou art the torturer of the brave !
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
Even while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said,—
“ Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul ?
Say, what may this portend ? ”—
Then first the Palmer silence broke,
(The livelong day he had not spoke,)
“ The death of a dear friend.”

XIV.

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity ;
Marmion, whose soul could scantily brook,
Even from his King, a haughty look ;

¹ Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the “dead-bell,” explained by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease. He tells a story to the purpose in the “Mountain Bard,” p. 26.

Whose accent of command controll'd,
In camps, the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance fail'd him now,
Fall'n was his glance, and flush'd his brow :

For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,

That answer he found none.

Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,

A feather daunts the brave ;

A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,

And proudest princes veil their eyes

Before their meanest slave.

XV.

Well might he falter !—By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betray'd.
Not that he augur'd of the doom,
Which on the living closed the tomb :
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid ;
And wroth, because in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare ;
Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave ;
And deem'd restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders idle fear,
Secure his pardon he might hold,
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way,
When the stern priests surprised their prey.

His train but deem'd the favourite page
Was left behind, to spare his age ;
Or other if they deem'd, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard
Woe to the vassal, who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy !

XVI.

His conscience slept—he deem'd her well,
And safe secured in distant cell ;
But, waken'd by her favourite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear,
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
Dark tales of convent vengeance rose ;
And Constance, late betray'd and scorn'd,
All lovely on his soul return'd ;
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimson'd with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII.

“ Alas ! ” he thought, “ how changed that mien !
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
Have steel'd her brow, and arm'd her eyes !
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks ;
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair ;

And I the cause—for whom were given
 Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven !—
 Would,” thought he, as the picture grows,
 “ I on its stalk had left the rose !
 Oh, why should man’s success remove
 The very charms that wake his love !—
 Her convent’s peaceful solitude
 Is now a prison harsh and rude ;
 And, pent within the narrow cell,
 How will her spirit chafe and swell !
 How brook the stern monastic laws !
 The penance how—and I the cause !—
 Vigil and scourge—perchance even worse !”—
 And twice he rose to cry, “ To horse ! ”
 And twice his Sovereign’s mandate came,
 Like damp upon a kindling flame ;
 And twice he thought, “ Gave I not charge
 She should be safe, though not at large ?
 They durst not, for their island, shred
 One golden ringlet from her head.”

XVIII.

While thus in Marmion’s bosom strove
 Repentance and reviving love,
 Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
 I’ve seen Loch Vennachar obey,
 Their Host the Palmer’s speech had heard,
 And, talkative, took up the word :
 “ Ay, reverend Pilgrim, you, who stray
 From Scotland’s simple land away,
 To visit realms afar,
 Full often learn the art to know
 Of future weal, or future woe,
 By word, or sign, or star ;
 Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
 If, knight-like, he despises fear,

Not far from hence ;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told.” —
These broken words the menials move,
(For marvels still the vulgar love,)
And, Marazion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told :—

XIX.

The Host's Tale.

“A Clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander fill'd our throne,
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord .
A braver never drew a sword :
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power :
The same, whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.
I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay
Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof, and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies .

¹ A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford, or Yester, for it bears either name indifferently, the construction of which has from a very remote period been ascribed to magic. The Statistical Account of the Parish of Garvald and Baro, gives the following account of the present state of this castle and apartment :—“Upon a peninsula, formed by the water of Hopes on the east, and a large rivulet on the west, stands the ancient castle of Yester. Sir David Dalrymple, in his Annals, relates, that ‘Hugh Gifford de Yester died in 1267; that in his castle there was a capacious cavern, formed by magical art, and called in the country Hob-Hall, i.e., Hobgoblin Hall.’ A stair of twenty-four steps led down to this apartment, which is a large and spacious hall, with an arched roof; and though it hath stood for so many centuries, and been exposed to the external air for a period of fifty or sixty years, it is still as firm and entire as if it had only stood a few years. From the floor of this hall, another stair of thirty-six steps leads down to a pit which hath a communication with Hopes-water. A great part of the walls of this large and ancient castle are still standing. There is a tradition that the castle of Yester was the last fortification, in this country, that surrendered to General Gray, sent into

To hew the living rock profound,
 The floor to pave, the arch to round,
 There never toil'd a mortal arm,
 It all was wrought by word and charm ;
 And I have heard my grandsire say,
 That the wild clamour and affray
 Of those dread artisans of hell,
 Who labour'd under Hugo's spell,
 Sounded as loud as ocean's war,
 Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX.

"The King Lord Gifford's castle sought,
 Deep labouring with uncertain thought ;
 Even then he muster'd all his host,
 To meet upon the western coast :
 For Norse and Danish galleys plied
 Their oars within the frith of Clyde.
 There floated Haco's banner trim,¹
 Above Norweyan warriors grim,
 Savage of heart, and large of limb ;
 Threatening both continent and isle
 Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.

Scotland by Protector Somerset." *Statistical Account*, vol. xiii.—I have only to add, that, in 1737, the Goblin Hall was tenanted by the Marquis of Tweeddale's falconer, as I learn from a poem by Boyse, entitled "Retirement," written upon visiting Yester. It is now rendered inaccessible by the fall of the stair.

Sir David Dalrymple's authority for the anecdote is in Fordun, whose words are,—*"A.D. MCCLXVII. Hugo Giffard de Yester moritur; cujus castrum, vel saltem caveam, et dongionem, arte demonich antiquæ relationes ferunt fabrifactas: nam ibidem habetur mirabilis specus subterraneus, opere mirifico construtus, magno terrarum spatio protelatus, qui communiter Bo-Hall appellatus est."* Lib. X. cap. 21.—Sir David conjectures, that Hugh de Gifford must either have been a very wise man, or a great oppressor.

¹ In 1263, Haco, King of Norway, came into the Frith of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2nd October, by Alexander III. Haco retreated to Orkney, where he died soon after this disgrace to his arms. There are still existing, near the place of battle, many barrows, some of them, having been opened, were found, as usual, to contain bones and urns.

Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
And tarried not his garb to change,
But, in his wizard habit strange,¹
Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight ;
His mantle lined with fox-skins white ;
His high and wrinkled forehead bore
A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore :
His shoes were mark'd with cross and spell,
Upon his breast a pentacle ;²
His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and trine ;
And in his hand he held prepared,
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI.

“ Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had mark'd strange lines upon his face ;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
His eyesight dazzled seem'd and dim,
As one unused to upper day ;
Even his own menials with dismay

1 “Magicians, as is well known, were very curious in the choice and form of their vestments. Their caps are oval, or like pyramids, with lappets on each side, and fur within. Their gowns are long, and furred with fox-skins, under which they have a linen garment reaching to the knee. Their girdles are three inches broad, and have many cabalistical names, with crosses, trines, and circles inscribed on them. Their shoes should be of new russet leather, with a cross cut upon them. Their knives are dagger-fashion ; and their swords have neither guard nor scabbard.”—See these, and many other particulars, in the Discourse concerning Devils and Spirits, annexed to REGINALD SCOTT'S *Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665.

2 “A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the magician extends towards the spirits which he invokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic.”—See the Discourses, &c, above mentioned, p. 66.

Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly Sire,
 In his unwonted wild attire ;
 Unwonted, for traditions run,
 He seldom thus beheld the sun.—
 ‘ I know,’ he said,—his voice was hoarse,
 And broken seem’d its hollow force,—
 ‘ I know the cause, although untold,
 Why the King seeks his vassal’s hold :
 Vainly from me my liege would know
 His kingdom’s future weal or woe ;
 But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
 His courage may do more than art.

XXII.

“ ‘ Of middle air the demons proud,
 Who ride upon the racking cloud,
 Can read, in fix’d or wandering star,
 The issue of events afar ;
 But still their sullen aid withhold,
 Save when by mightier force controll’d.
 Such late I summon’d to my hall ;
 And though so potent was the call,
 That scarce the deepest nook of hell
 I deem’d a refuge from the spell,
 Yet, obstinate in silence still,
 The haughty demon mocks my skill
 But thou,—who little know’st thy might,
 As born upon that blessed night ¹
 When yawning graves, and dying groan,
 Proclaim’d hell’s empire overthrown,—
 With untaught valour shalt compel
 Response denied to magic spell.’—

¹ It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on Christmas, or Good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II. to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

‘Gramercy,’ quoth our Monarch free,
‘Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honour’d brand,
The gift of Cœur-de-Lion’s hand,
Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
The demon shall a buffet bide.”—
His bearing bold the wizard view’d,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renew’d :—
‘There spoke the blood of Malcolm !—mark :
Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,
The rampart seek, whose circling crown
Crests the ascent of yonder down :
A southern entrance shalt thou find ;
There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
And trust thine elfin foe to see,
In guise of thy worst enemy :
Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
Upon him ! and Saint George to speed !
If he go down, thou soon shalt know
Whate’er these airy sprites can show ;—
If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life.’

XXIII.

“Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and arm’d, forth rode the King
To that old camp’s deserted round ;
Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound,
Left hand the town,—the Pictish race ;
The trench, long since, in blood did trace ;
The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild-flowers grow ;
But woe betide the wandering wight,
That treads its circle in the night !

The breadth across, a bowshot clear,
Gives ample space for full career ;
Opposed to the four points of heaven,
By four deep gaps are entrance given.
The southernmost our Monarch past,
Halted, and blew a gallant blast ;
And on the north, within the ring,
Appear'd the form of England's King,
Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war :
Yet arms like England's did he wield
Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same :
Long afterwards did Scotland know,
Fell Edward¹ was her deadliest foe.

XXIV.

"The vision made our Monarch start,
But soon he mann'd his noble heart,
And in the first career they ran,
The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man ;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And razed the skin—a puny wound.
The King, light leaping to the ground,
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compell'd the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war ;
Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandish'd war-axe wield,
And strike proud Haco from his car,

¹ Edward I., surnamed Longshanks.



SIR DAVID LINDESAI'S TALE TO MARMION AT CRICHTOUN CASTLE

And, closer question'd, thus he told

A tale, which chronicles of old

In Scottish story have enroll'd.—*Marmion*, v. 113

From the drawing by Geo. Cuthbert.

While all around the shadowy Kings
Denmark's grim ravens cower'd their wings.
'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
Remoter visions met his sight,
Foreshowing future conquests far,
When our son's sons wage northern war ;
A royal city, tower and spire,
Redden'd the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore,
Triumphant, to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV.

"The joyful King turn'd home again,
Headed his host, and quell'd the Dane ;
But yearly, when return'd the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart ;
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start.'
'Long since, beneath Dumfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our Lady give him rest !
Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast ;¹
And many a knight hath proved his chance,
In the charm'd ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped ;
Save two, as legends tell, and they,
Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—
Gentles, my tale is said.'

¹ [See Note 15.]

XXVI.

The quaighs ¹ were deep, the liquor strong,
And on the tale the yeoman throng
Had made a comment sage and long,
 But Marmion gave a sign :
And, with their lord, the squires retire ;
The rest, around the hostel fire,
 Their drowsy limbs recline ;
For pillow, underneath each head,
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppress'd with toil and ale, they snore :
The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII.

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay ;
Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen
The foldings of his mantle green :
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And, close beside him, when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form, with nodding plume ;
But ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew.

¹ A wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.

XXVIII.

—“Fitz-Eustace ! rise,—I cannot rest ;
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood :
The air must cool my feverish blood ;
And fain would I ride forth, to see
The scene of elfin chivalry,
Arise, and saddle me my steed ;
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves ;
I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale.”—
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed array'd,
While, whispering, thus the Baron said :—

XXIX.

“ Did'st never, good my youth, hear tell,
That on the hour when I was born,
Saint George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn ?
The flattering chaplains all agree,
The champion left his steed to me.
I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this Elfin Foe !
Blithe would I battle, for the right
To ask one question at the sprite :—
Vain thought ! for elves, if elves there be,
An empty race, by fount or sea,

To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel their ring.
Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And mark'd him pace the village road,
And listen'd to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Wonder it seem'd, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise,—
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel, what the church believed,—
Should, stirr'd by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Array'd in plate and mail.
For little did Fitz-Eustace know,
That passions, in contending flow,
Unfix the strongest mind ;
Wearied, from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But, patient, waited till he heard,
At distance, prick'd to utmost speed.
The foot-tramp of a flying steed,

Come town-ward rushing on ;
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
Then, clattering on the village road,—
In other pace than forth he yode,¹

Return'd Lord Marmion.

Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And, in his haste, wellnigh he fell ;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew :
But yet the moonlight did betray,
The falcon crest was soil'd with clay ;
And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee,
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,
At length to rest the squire reclines,
Broken and short, for still, between,
Would dreams of terror intervene :
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

¹ *Yode*, used by old poets for *went*.

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH.

JAMES SKENE, ESQ.¹

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

AN ancient Minstrel sagely said,
“ Where is the life which late we led ? ”
That motley clown in Arden wood,
Whom humorous Jacques with envy view’d,
Not even that clown could amplify,
On this trite text, so long as I.
Eleven years we now may tell,
Since we have known each other well ;
Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand ;
And sure, through many a varied scene,
Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,
To join the mass of ages gone ;
And though deep mark’d, like all below,
With chequer’d shades of joy and woe ;

¹ [James Skene, Esq., of Rubislaw, Aberdeenshire, was Cornet in the Royal Edinburgh Light Horse Volunteers; and Sir Walter Scott was Quartermaster of the same corps.]

Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,
Mark'd cities lost, and empires changed,
While here, at home, my narrower ken
Somewhat of manners saw, and men ;
Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,
Fever'd the progress of these years,
Yet now, days, weeks, and months, but seem
The recollection of a dream,
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day,
Since first I tuned this idle lay ;
A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now, November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspir'd my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vex'd boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights, and Ettrick Pen,
Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again :
And mountain dark, and flooded mead,
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,
Mix'd with the rack, the snow mists fly ;
The shepherd who, in summer sun,
Had something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen ;—¹
He who, outstretch'd the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,

¹ Various illustrations of the Poetry and Novels of Sir Walter Scott from designs by Mr. Skene were afterwards published.]

View'd the light clouds with vacant look,
Or slumber'd o'er his tatter'd book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessen'd tide ;—
At midnight now, the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.

When red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dark and dun ;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane ;
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task.
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain ;
Till, dark above, and white below,
Decided drives the flaky snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.
Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave the hearth his dogs repine ;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his back he wreathes the plaid :
His flock he gathers, and he guides,
To open downs, and mountain-sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
Stiffens his locks to icicles ;
Oft he looks back, while streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star,—
Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
Turns patient to the blast again,



LINLITHGOW

From the drawing by G. F. Robson.



LINLITHGOW

Of all the palaces so fair, built for the royal dwelling,
In Scotland, far beyond compare Linlithgow is excelling.

Marmion, p. 120

From the drawing by Sir A. W. Calcott, R.A.

And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale :
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain :¹
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail ;
And, close beside him, in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,
His summer couch by greenwood tree,
His rustic kirk's a loud revelry,
His native hill-notes, tuned on high,
To Marion of the blithesome eye ;
His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed ?

Changes not so with us, my Skene,
Of human life the varying scene ?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and glee,
While the dark storm reserves its rage,
Against the winter of our age .
As he, the ancient Chief of Troy.
His manhood spent in peace and joy ;

¹ I cannot help here mentioning, that, on the night in which these lines were written, suggested, as they were, by a sudden fall of snow, beginning after sunset, an unfortunate man perished exactly in the manner here described, and his body was next morning found close to his own house. The accident happened within five miles of the farm of Ashestriel.

² The Scottish Harvest-home

But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
 Call'd ancient Priam forth to arms.
 Then happy those, since each must drain
 His share of pleasure, share of pain,—
 Then happy those, beloved of Heaven,
 To whom the mingled cup is given ;
 Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
 Whose joys are chasten'd by their grief.
 And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
 When thou of late, wert doom'd to twine,—
 Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
 The cypress with the myrtle tie.
 Just on thy bride her Sire had smiled,
 And bless'd the union of his child,
 When love must change its joyous cheer,
 And wipe affection's filial tear.
 Nor did the actions next his end,
 Speak more the father than the friend :
 Scarce had lamented Forbes¹ paid
 The tribute to his Minstrel's shade ;
 The tale of friendship scarce was told,
 Ere the narrator's heart was cold—
 Far may we search before we find
 A heart so manly and so kind !
 But not around his honour'd urn,
 Shall friends alone and kindred mourn ;
 The thousand eyes his care had dried,
 Pour at his name a bitter tide ;
 And frequent falls the grateful dew,
 For benefits the world ne'er knew.

¹ Sir William Forbes of Pit-lizo, Baronet: unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His "Life of Beattie," whom he befriended and patronised in life, as well as celebrated after his decease, was not long published, before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend, to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of Sir William's daughters.

If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name ;
Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
"The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
My verse intrudes on this sad theme ;
For sacred was the pen that wrote,
"Thy father's friend forget thou not :"
And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his grave :—
'Tis little—but 'tis all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again ;
When, doing nought,—and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find ought to do,—
The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
While oft our talk its topic changed,
And, desultory as our way,
Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.
Even when it flagg'd, as oft will chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pursue
Our sports in social silence too ;
Thou gravely labouring to pourtray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray ;
I spelling o'er, with much delight,
The legend of that antique knight,
Tirante by name, yclep'd the White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp,¹ with eyes of fire,

¹ [*Camp* was a favourite dog of the Poet's, a bull-terrier of extraordinary sagacity. He is introduced in Raeburn's portrait of Sir Walter Scott, now at Dalkeith Palace.]

Jealous, each other's motions view'd,
 And scarce suppress'd their ancient feud.
 The laverock whistled from the cloud ;
 The stream was lively, but not loud ;
 From the white thorn the May-flower shed
 Its dewy fragrance round our head :
 Not Ariel lived more merrily
 Under the blossom'd bough, than we.

And blithsome nights, too, have been ours,
 When Winter stipt the summer's bowers.
 Careless we heard, what now I hear,
 The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
 When fires were bright, and lamps beam'd gay,
 And ladies tuned the lovely lay ;
 And he was held a laggard soul,
 Who shunn'd to quaff the sparkling bowl.
 Then he, whose absence we deplore,¹
 Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
 The longer miss'd, bewail the more ;
 And thou, and I, and dear-loved R——,²
 And one whose name I may not say,—³
 For not Mimosa's tender tree
 Shrinks sooner from the touch than he,—
 In merry chorus well combined,
 With laughter drown'd the whistling wind.
 Mirth was within ; and care without
 Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
 Not but amid the buxom scene
 Some grave discourse might intervene—

¹ [Colin Mackenzie, Esq. of Portmore.]

² [Sir William Rae of St. Catharine's, Bart., subsequently Lord Advocate of Scotland, was a distinguished member of the volunteer corps to which Sir Walter Scott belonged ; and he, the Poet, Mr. Skene, Mr. Mackenzie, and a few other friends, had formed themselves into a little semi-military club, the meetings of which were held at their family supper-tables in rotation.]

³ [The gentleman whose name the Poet " might not say," was Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo, Bart., son of the author of the *Life of Beattie*.]

Of the good horse that bore him best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest :
For, like mad Tom's,¹ our chiefest care,
Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.
Such nights we've had ; and, though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field-day, or the drill,
Seem less important now—yet still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my strain !
And mark, how, like a horseman true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

¹ See *King Lear*.

M A R M I O N .

CANTO FOURTH.

The Camp.

1.

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew
And with their light and lively call,
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
 Whistling they came, and free of heart,
 But soon their mood was changed ;
 Complaint was heard on every part,
 Of something disarranged.
Some clamour'd loud for armour lost ;
Some brawl'd and wrangled with the host ;
" By Becket's bones," cried one, " I fear,
That some false Scot has stolen my spear !"—
Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,
Found his steed wet with sweat and mire ;
Although the rated horse-boy sware,
Last night he dress'd him sleek and fair.
While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,
Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
' Help, gentle Blount ! help, comrades all !
Bevis lies dying in his stall :

To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
 Of the good steed he loves so well ?"—
 Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
 The charger panting on his straw ;
 Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,—
 "What else but evil could betide,
 With that cursed Palmer for our guide ?
 Better we had through mire and bush
 Been lantern-led by Friar Rush."¹

II.

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guess'd,
 Nor wholly understood,
 His comrades' clamorous complaints suppress'd ;
 He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
 Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
 And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
 And did his tale display
 Simply, as if he knew of nought
 To cause such disarray.
 Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
 Nor marvel'd at the wonders told,—
 Pass'd them as accidents of course,
 And bade his ciarions sound to horse.

¹ *Alias*, "Will o' the Wisp." This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lantern. It is in allusion to this mischievous demon that Milton's clown speaks,—

"She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
 And he by *Friar's lantern* led.

"The History of Friar Rush" is of extreme rarity, and, for some time, even the existence of such a book was doubted, although it is expressly alluded to by Reginald Scot, in his "Discovery of Witchcraft." I have perused a copy in the valuable library of my friend Mr. Heber; and I observe, from Mr. Beloe's "Anecdotes of Literature," that there is one in the excellent collection of the Marquis of Stafford.

III.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
Had reckon'd with their Scottish host ;
And, as the charge he cast and paid,
" Ill thou deservest thy hire," he said ;
" Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight ?
Fairies have ridden him all the night,
And left him in a foam !
I trust, that soon a conjuring band,
With English cross, and blazing brand,
Shall drive the devils from this land,
To their infernal home :
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trampled to and fro."—
The laughing host look'd on the hire,—
" Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou comest among the rest,
With Scottish broadsword to be blest,
Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
And short the pang to undergo."
Here stay'd their talk,—for Marmion
Gave now the signal to set on.
The Palmer showing forth the way,
They journey'd all the morning day.

IV.

The green-sward way was smooth and good,
Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood ;
A forest glade, which, varying still,
Here gave a view of dale and hill,
There narrower closed, till over head
A vaulted screen the branches made.
" A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said ;
" Such as where errant-knights might see
Adventures of high chivalry ;

Might meet some damsel flying fast,
With hair unbound, and looks aghast ;
And smooth and level course were here,
In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells ;
And oft, in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger freed,
Did grateful pay her champion's meed."
He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind ;
Perchance to show his lore design'd ;

For Eustace had much pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall-window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome
Of Caxton, or de Worde.

Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
For Marmion answer'd nought again.

V.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolong'd by wood and hill,
Were heard to echo far ;
Each ready archer grasp'd his bow,
But by the flourish soon they know,
They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
Lord Marmion's order speeds the band,
Some opener ground to gain ;
And scarce a furlong had they rode,
When thinner trees, receding, show'd
A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade,
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
Issued a gallant train.

VI.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang
 So late the forest echoes rang ;
 On prancing steeds they forward press'd,
 With scarlet mantle, azure vest ;
 Each at his trump a banner wore,
 Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore :
 Herald and pursuivants, by name
 Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothsay, came,
 In painted tabards, proudly showing
 Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,
 Attendant on a King-at-arms,
 Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
 That feudal strife had often quell'd,
 When wildest its alarms.

VII.

He was a man of middle age ;
 In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
 As on King's errand come ;
 But in the glances of his eye,
 A penetrating, keen, and sly
 Expression found its home ;
 The flash of that satiric rage,
 Which, bursting on the early stage,
 Branded the vices of the age,
 And broke the keys of Rome.
 On milk-white palfrey forth he paced ;
 His cap of maintenance was graced
 With the proud heron-plume.
 From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,
 Silk housings swept the ground,
 With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
 Embroider'd round and round.

The double treasure might you see.
First by Achaius borne,
The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
And gallant unicorn.
So bright the King's armorial coat,
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
In living colours, blaze'd brave,
The Lion, which his title gave,
A train, which well beseem'd his state,
But all unarm'd, around him wait.
Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms !¹

. VIII.

Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
Soon as he saw the Lion-King ;
For well the stately Baron knew
To him such courtesy was due,
Whom royal James himself had crown'd,
And on his temples placed the round
Of Scotland's ancient diadem :
And wet his brow with hallow'd wine,
And on his finger given to shine
The emblematic gem.
Their mutual greetings duly made,
The Lion thus his message said :—
“ Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court ;

¹ [See Note 16.]

Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name,
 And honours much his warlike fame,
 My liege hath deem'd it shame, and lack
 Of courtesy, to turn him back ;
 And, by his order, I, your guide,
 Must lodging fit and fair provide,
 Till finds King James meet time to see
 The flower of English chivalry."

IX.

Though inly chafed at this delay,
 Lord Marmion bears it as he may.
 The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
 Beholding thus his place suppl'd,
 Sought to take leave in vain :
 Strict was the Lion-King's command,
 That none, who rode in Marmion's band,
 Should sever from the train :
 "England has here enow of spies
 In Lady Heron's witching eyes :"
 To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,
 But fair pretext to Marmion made.
 The right hand path they now decline,
 And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X.

At length up that wild dale they wind,
 Where Crichtoun Castle¹ crowns the bank ;
 For there the Lion's care assigned
 A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.

¹ [See Note 17, and, for a fuller description of Crichton Castle, see Sir Walter Scott's *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland*, 4to, 1826, vol. i.

That Castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne :
And far beneath, where slow they creep,
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose ;
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands ;
A mighty mass, that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI.

Crichtoun ! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
Thy turrets rude, and totter'd Keep,
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
Quarter'd in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence.
Nor wholly yet had time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair ;
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,
Whose twisted notes, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruin'd stair.
Still rises unimpair'd below,
The court-yard's graceful portico ;
Above its cornice, row and row
Of fair hewn facets richly show
Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but houseless cattle go,
To shield them from the storm.

And, shuddering, still may we explore,
 Where oft whilom were captives pent,
 The darkness of thy Massy More ;¹
 Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
 May trace in undulating line,
 The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII.

Another aspect Crichtoun show'd,
 As through its portal Marmion rode ;
 But yet 'twas melancholy state
 Received him at the outer gate ;
 For none were in the Castle then,
 But women, boys, or aged men.
 With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,
 To welcome noble Marmion, came ;
 Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
 Proffer'd the Baron's rein to hold ;
 For each man that could draw a sword
 Had march'd that morning with their lord,
 Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died
 On Flodden, by his sovereign's side,²
 Long may his Lady look in vain !
 She ne'er shall see his gallant train,
 Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-Dean,
 'Twas a brave race, before the name
 Of hated Bothwell stain'd their fame.³

¹ The pit, or prison vault.—[See Note 17.]

² He was the second Earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where, according to an ancient English poet (*Flodden Field*, a Poem; edited by H. Weber, Edin. 1808) he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day.

³ Adam was grandfather to James, Earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of Queen Mary.

XIII.

And here two days did Marmion rest,
With every rite that honour claims,
Attended as the King's own guest ;—
Such the command of Royal James,
Who marshall'd then his land's array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
Perchance he would not foeman's eye
Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
Oft cheer the Baron's moodier fit ;
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise,—
Train'd in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

XIV.

It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlements they walk'd,
And, by the slowly fading light,
Of varying topics talk'd ;
And, unaware, the Herald-bard
Said, Marmion might his toil have spared,
In travelling so far ;
For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war :¹
And, closer question'd, thus he told
A tale, which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enroll'd :—

¹ [See Note 18.]

XV.

Sir David Lindsay's Tale.

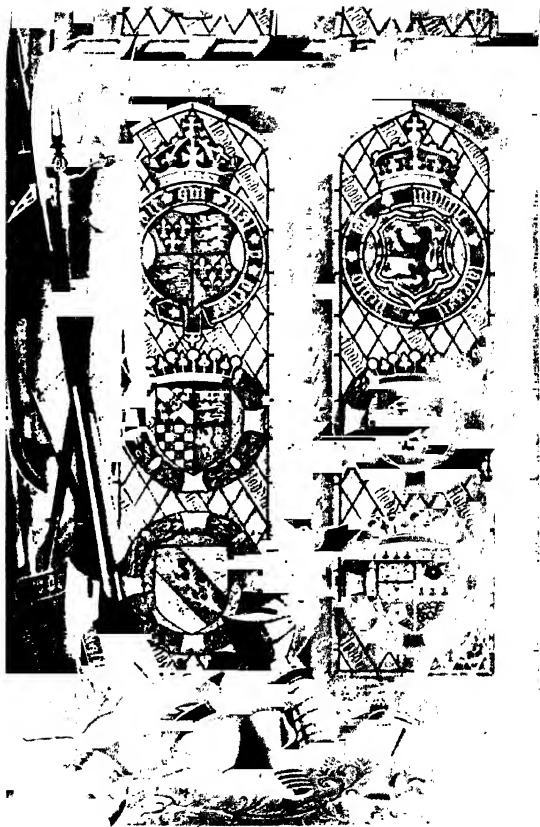
"Of all the palaces so fair,
 Built for the royal dwelling,
 In Scotland, far beyond compare
 Linlithgow is excelling ;
 And in its park, in jovial June,
 How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
 How blithe the blackbird's lay !
 The wild-buck bells ² from ferny brake,
 The coot dives merry on the lake,
 The saddest heart might pleasure take
 To see all nature gay.
 But June is to our Sovereign dear
 The heaviest month in all the year :
 Too well his cause of grief you know,
 June saw his father's overthrow, ³
 Woe to the traitors, who could bring
 The princely boy against his King !
 Still in his conscience burns the sting.
 In offices as strict as Lent,
 King James's June is ever spent.

¹ In Scotland there are about twenty palaces, castles, and remains, or sites of such,

"Where *Scotia's* kings of other years"
 had their royal home.

² I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the Psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of bellow. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association.

³ The rebellion against James III. was signalized by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in the hostile army. When the King saw his own banner displayed against him, and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he had ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV., after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. See a following Note on stanza ix. of canto v. The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III. fell, was fought 18th June, 1488.



MARMION'S ARMOUR, AND THE HERALDRY OF THE HEROES OF FLOODEN

The ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and plann'd,
But yet so glowing and so grand.

Marmion, p. 146

From the drawing by J. H. Nixon

XVI.

"When last this ruthful month was come,
And in Linlithgow's holy dome

The King, as wont, was praying ;
While, for his Royal father's soul,
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,

The Bishop mass was saying—
For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless King was slain—
In Katharine's aisle the Monarch knelt,
With sackcloth-shirt, and iron belt,

And eyes with sorrow streaming ;
Around him in their stalls of state,
The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,

Their banners o'er them beaming.
I too was there, and, smooth to tell,
Bedeafen'd with the jangling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stain'd casement gleaming ;
But, while I mark'd what next befell

It seem'd as I were dreaming.
Stepp'd from the crowd a ghostly wight
In azure gown, with cincture white ;
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
Now, mock me not, when, good my Lord,
I pledge to you my nightly word,
That, when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,

His solemn bearing, and his pace
So stately gliding on,—
Seem'd to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the Saint,
Who propp'd the Virgin in her faint,—
The loved Apostle John !

XVII.

"He stepp'd before the Monarch's chair,
 And stood with rustic plainness there,
 And little reverence made ;
 Nor head, nor body, bow'd nor bent,
 But on the desk his arm he leant,
 And words like these he said,
 In a low voice,—but never tone
 So thrill'd through vein, and nerve, and bone :—
 ' My mother sent me from afar,
 Sir King, to warn, thee not to war,—
 Woe waits on thine array ;
 If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
 Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
 James Stuart, doubly warn'd, beware :
 God keep thee as he may !'—
 The wondering Monarch seem'd to seek
 For answer, and found none ;
 And when he raised his head to speak,
 The monitor was gone.
 The Marshal and myself had cast
 To stop him as he outward pass'd ;
 But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
 He vanish'd from our eyes,
 Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
 That glances but, and dies."

XVIII.

While Lindesay told his marvel strange,
 The twilight was so pale,
 He mark'd not Marmion's colour change,
 While listening to the tale :
 But, after a suspended pause,
 The Baron spoke :—" Of Nature's laws
 So strong I held the force,

That never superhuman cause
Could e'er control their course ;
And, three days since, had judg'd your aim
Was but to make your guest your game.
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my sceptic creed,
And made me credit aught."—He staid,
And seem'd to wish his words unsaid :
But, by that strong emotion press'd,
Which prompts us to unload our breast,
Even when discovery's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told,
At Gifford, to his train.
Nought of the Palmer says he there,
And nought of Constance, or of Clare ;
The thoughts, which broke his sleep, he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX.

"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couch'd my head :
Fantastic thoughts return'd ;
And, by their wild dominion led,
My heart within me burn'd.
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed, and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reach'd the camp upon the wold.
The southern entrance I pass'd through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear,—
Yet was the blast so low and drear,"
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

XX.

“ Thus judging, for a little space
I listen’d, ere I left the place ;
 But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they served me true;
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,
 And mounted champion rise.—
I’ve fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
In single fight, and mix’d affray,
And ever, ’t myself may say,
 Have borne me as a knight :
But when this unexpected foe
Seem’d starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,—
 I trembled with affright ;
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
 I scarce could couch is right.

XXI.

“ Why need my tongue the issue tell ?
We ran our course,—my charger fell ;—
What could he ’gainst the shock of hell ?
 I roll’d upon the plain.
High o’er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
 Yet did the worst remain :
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast
 Their sight, like what I saw !
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
A face could never be mistook !
I knew the stern vindictive look,
 And held my breath for awe.

I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
I well believe the last ;
For ne'er, from vizer raised, did stare
A human warrior, with a glare
So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade ;
But when to good Saint George I pray'd,
(The first time e'er I asked his aid,)
He plunged it in the sheath ;
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seem'd to vanish from my sight :
The moonbeam droop'd, and deepest night
Sunk down upon the heath.—
'Twere long to tell what cause I have
To know his face that met me there.
Call'd by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air ;
Dead, or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy.

XXII.

Marvell'd Sir David of the Mount ;
'Then, learn'd in story, 'gan recount,
Such chance had happ'd of old,
When once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre full of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And train'd him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.
"And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,
With Highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,
And fingers red with gore,

Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
 Or where the sable pine-trees shade
 Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,
 Dromouchty, or Glenmore.¹
 And yet, whate'er such legends say,
 Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
 On mountain, moor, or plain,
 Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
 True son of chivalry should hold
 These midnight terrors vain ;
 For seldom have such spirits power
 To harm, save in the evil hour,
 When guilt we meditate within,
 Or harbour unrepented sin."—
 Lord Marmion turn'd him half aside,
 And twice to clear his voice he tried,
 Then press'd Sir David's hand,—
 But nought, at length, in answer said ;
 And here their farther converse staid,
 Each ordering that his band
 Should bowne them with the rising day,
 To Scotland's camp to take their way,—
 Such was the King's command.

XXIII.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
 And I could trace each step they trode ;
 Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
 Lies on the path to me unknown.
 Much might it boast of storied lore ;
 But, passing, such digression o'er,
 Suffice it that their route was laid
 Across the furzy hills of Braid.

¹ See the traditions concerning Bulmer, and the spectre called *Lham-dearg*, or Bloody-hand, in a note on canto iii. [Note 15.]

They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,
And climb'd the opposing bank, until
They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV.

Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose, on breezes thin,
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din,
Now, from the summit to the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain ;
And o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
To me they make a heavy moan,
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV.

But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion, from the crown
Of Blackford, saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown :
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,¹

¹ The Borough, or Common Moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills. It was anciently a forest ; and, in that state, was so great a nuisance, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted to them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber ; which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV. mustered the array of the kingdom there, in 1513, the

Upland, and dale, and down :—
 A thousand did I say? I ween,
 Thousands on thousands there were seen,
 That chequer'd all the heath between
 The streamlet and the town ;
 In crossing ranks extending far,
 Forming a camp irregular ;
 Oft giving way, where still there stood
 Some relics of the old oak wood,
 That darkly huge did intervene,
 And tamed the glaring white with green :
 In these extended lines there lay
 A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
 To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
 And from the southern Redswire edge,
 To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge ;
 From west to east, from south to north,
 Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
 Marmion might hear the mingled hum
 Of myriads up the mountain come ;
 The horses' tramp, and tingling clank,
 Where chiefs review'd their vassal rank,
 And charger's shrilling neigh ;
 And see the shifting lines advance,
 While frequent flash'd, from shield and lance,
 The sun's reflected ray.

Borough-moor was, according to Hawthornden, "a field spacious, and delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks." Upon that, and similar occasions, the royal standard is traditionally said to have been displayed from the Hare Stane, a high stone, now built into the wall on the left hand of the highway leading towards Braid, not far from the head of Burntsfield Links. The Hare Stane probably derives its name from the British word *Har*, signifying an army.

[Since Sir Walter Scott wrote this, the City has extended far beyond the spot indicated.]

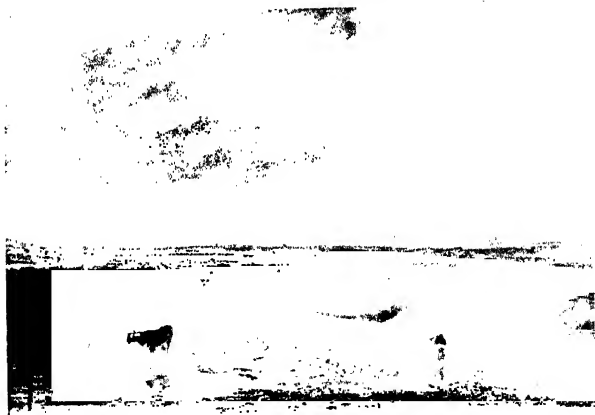


CRICHTOUN CASTLE

At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the bank.

Marmion, p. 116

From the drawing by J. M. W. Turner, R.A.



THE BRAID HILLS

The train has left the hills of Braid.

Marmion, p. 141

From the drawing by Sir A. W. Callcott, R.A.

XXVII.

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of failing smoke declare
To embers now the brands decay'd,
Where the night-watch their fires had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugg'd to war ;
And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven,
And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omen'd gift ! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII.

Nor mark'd they less, where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair ;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tail'd, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol,² there
O'er the pavilions flew.
Highest, and midmost, was descried
The royal banner floating wide ;
The staff, a pine-tree, strong and straight,
Pitch'd deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight
Whene'er the western wind unroll'd,
With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,

¹ Seven culverins so called, cast by one Borthwick.

² Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.¹

XXIX.

Lord Marmion view'd the landscape bright,—
He view'd it with a chief's delight,—
Until within him burn'd his heart,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day;
Such glance did falcon never dart,
When stooping on his prey.
“Oh ! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
Thy King from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay :
For, by St. George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal, nor divine,
Should once to peace my soul incline,
Till I had dimm'd their armour's shine
In glorious battle-fray !”
Answer'd the Bard, of milder mood :
“Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
That Kings would think withal,
When peace and wealth their land has bless'd,
'Tis better to sit still at rest,
Than rise, perchance to fall.”

XXX.

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stay'd,
For fairer scene he ne'er survey'd.

¹ The well-known arms of Scotland. If you will believe Boethius and Buchanan, the double tressure round the shield, mentioned, *counter fleur-de-lysé, or lingued and armed azure*, was first assumed by Achaius, King of Scotland, contemporary of Charlemagne, and founder of the celebrated League with France ; but later antiquaries make poor Eochy, or Achy, little better than a sort of King of Brentford, whom old Grig (who has also swelled into Gregorius Magnus) associated with himself in the important duty of governing some part of the north-eastern coast of Scotland.

When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
 With gloomy splendour red ;
For on the smoke-wreaths, large and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
 The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height
Where the huge Castle holds its state
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
 Mine own romantic town !
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
And as each heathy top they kiss'd,
It gleam'd a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw ;
Here Preston-Bay, and Berwick-Law ;
And, broad between them roll'd,
The gallant Frith the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float,
 Like emeralds chased in gold.
Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent :
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
 And raised his bridle hand,
And, making demi-volte in air,
Cried, " Where's the coward that would not dare
 To fight for such a land ! "
The Lindesay smiled his joy to see ;
Nor Marmion's frown repress'd his glee.

XXXI.

Thus while they look'd, a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
And fife, and kettle-drum,
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
And war-pipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,
Did up the mountain come ;
The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,
And thus the Lindesay spoke :
" Thus clamour still the war-notes when
The King to mass his way has ta'en,
Or to St. Katharine's of Sienne,
Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.
To you they speak of martial fame ;
But me remind of peaceful game,
When blither was their cheer,
Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,
In signal none his steed should spare,
But strive which foremost might repair
To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII.

" Nor less," he said,—“ when looking forth,
I view yon Empress of the North
Sit on her hilly throne ;
Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers—
“ Nor less,” he said, “ I moan,
To think what woe mischance may bring,
And how these merry bells may ring
The death-dirge of our gallant King ;

Or with the larum call
The burghers forth to watch and ward,
'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
Dun-Edin's leaguer'd wall.—

But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought !

Lord Marmion, I say nay :
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield —

But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
That England's dames must weep in bower,

Her monks the death-mass sing ;
For never saw'st thou such a power
Led on by such a King.”—

And now, down winding to the plain,
The barriers of the camp they gain,

And there they made a stay.—

There stays the Minstrel, till he fling
His hand o'er every Border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing,
Of Scotland's ancient Court and King,
In the succeeding lay.

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH.

TO

GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.¹

Edinburgh.

WHEN dark December glooms the day,
And takes our autumn joys away ;
When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
Upon the weary waste of snows,
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard ;
When silvan occupation's done,
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
And hang, in idle trophy, near,
The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear ;
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,
And greyhound, with his length of limb,
And pointer, now employ'd no more,
Cumber our parlour's narrow floor ;

[This accomplished gentleman, the well-known coadjutor of Mr. Canning and Mr. Frere in the "Antijacobin," and editor of "Specimens of Ancient English Romances," &c., died 10th April, 1815, aged 70 years; being succeeded in his estates by his brother, Charles Ellis, Esq., created, in 1827, Lord Seaforth.—ED.]

When in his stall the impatient steed
Is long condemn'd to rest and feed ;
When from our snow-encircled home,
Scarce cares the hardest step to roam,
Since path is none, save that to bring
The needful water from the spring ;
When wrinkled news-page, thrice conn'd o'er,
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
And darkling politician, cross'd,
Inveighs against the lingering post,
And answering housewife sore complains
Of carriers' snow-impeded wains ;
When such the country cheer, I come,
Well pleased, to seek our city home ;
For converse, and for books, to change
The Forest's melancholy range,
And welcome, with renew'd delight,
The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's riven towers,
And Ettrick stripp'd of forest bowers.¹
True,—Caledonia's Queen is changed,²
Since on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent,
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrison'd she stood,

¹ See Introduction to canto ii.

² The Old Town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake, now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of the city. My ingenious and valued friend, Mr. Thomas Campbell, proposed to celebrate Edinburgh under the epithet here borrowed. But the "Queen of the North" has not been so fortunate as to receive from so eminent a pen the proposed distinction.

Denying entrance or resort,
Save at each tall embattled port ;
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong. .
That long is gone,—but not so long,
Since, early closed, and opening late,
Jealous revolved the studded gate,
Whose task, from eve to morning tide, .
A wicket churlishly supplied.
Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin ! O, how altered now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sit'st, like Empress at her sport,
And liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,
For thy dark cloud, with umber'd lower,
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,
Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day.

Not she, the Championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enroll'd,
She for the charmed spear renown'd,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,
She gave to flow her maiden vest ;
When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved ;
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Erst hidden by the aventayle ;
And down her shoulders graceful roll'd
Her locks profuse, of paly gold.
They who whilom, in midnight fight,
Had marvell'd at her matchless might,

No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved.
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
And charm Malbecco's cares a while ;
And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,
Forgot his Columbella's claims,
And passion, erst unknown, could gain
The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane ;
Nor durst light Paridel advance,
Bold as he was, a looser glance.
She charmed, at once, and tamed the heart,
Incomparable Britomarte !

So thou, fair City ! disarray'd
Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
Than in that panoply of war.
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
Strength and security are flown ;
Still, as of yore, Queen of the North !
Still canst thou send thy children forth.
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
Thy dauntless voluntary line ;
For fosse and turret proud to stand,
Tneir breasts the bulwarks of the land.
Thy thousands, train'd to martial toil,
Full red would stain their native soil,
Ere from thy mural crown there fell
The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.
And if it come,—as come it may,
Dun-Edin ! that eventful day,—
Renown'd for hospitable deed,
That virtue much with Heaven may plead,

In patriarchal times whose care
 Descending angels deign'd to share ;
 That claim may wrestle blessings down
 On those who fight for The Good Town,
 Destined in every age to be
 Refuge of injured royalty ;
 Since first, when conquering York arose,
 To Henry meek she gave repose,¹
 Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
 Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.²

Truce to these thoughts !—for, as they rise
 How gladly I avert mine eyes,
 Bodings, or true or false, to change,
 For Fiction's fair romantic range,
 Or for Tradition's dubious light,
 That hovers 'twixt the day and night :
 Dazzling alternately and dim,
 Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
 Knights, squires, and lovely dames, to see,
 Creation of my fantasy,
 Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
 And make of mists invading men.—
 Who loves not more the night of June
 Than dull December's gloomy noon ?
 The moonlight than the fog of frost ?
 And can we say, which cheats the most ?

But who shall teach my harp to gain
 A sound of the romantic strain,

¹ [See Note 19.]

² [In January, 1796, the exiled Count d'Artois, afterwards Charles X. of France, took up his residence in Holyrood, where he remained until August, 1799. When again driven from his country by the Revolution of July, 1830, the same unfortunate Prince, with all the immediate members of his family, sought refuge once more in the ancient palace of the Stuarts, and remained there until 18th September, 1832.]

Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear,¹
Famed Beauclerc call'd, for that he loved
The minstrel, and his lay approved ?
Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
Decaying on Oblivion's stream ;
Such notes as from the Breton tongue
Marie translated, Blondel sung ?—
O ! born, Time's ravage to repair,
And make the dying Muse thy care ;
Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
Was poising for the final blow,
The weapon from his hand could wring,
And break his glass, and shear his wing,
And bid, reviving in his strain,
The gentle poet live again ;
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit ;
In letters as in life approved,
Example honour'd, and beloved,—
Dear ELLIS ! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart,—
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend !

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
Be long thy pleasing task,—but, O !

¹ Mr. Ellis, in his valuable Introduction to the "Specimens of Romance," has proved, by the concurring testimony of La Ravallere, Tressan, but especially the Abbé de la Rue, that the courts of our Anglo-Norman Kings, rather than those of the French monarch, produced the birth of Romance literature. Marie, soon after mentioned, compiled from Armorican originals, and translated into Norman-French, or romance language, the twelve curious Lays, of which Mr. Ellis has given us a *precis* in the Appendix to his Introduction. The story of Blondel, the famous and faithful minstrel of Richard I., needs no commentary.

No more by thy example teach,
—What few can practise, all can preach,—
With even patience to endure
Lingering disease, and painful cure,
And boast affliction's pangs subdued
By mild and manly fortitude.
Enough, the lesson has been given :
Forbid the repetition, Heaven !

Come listen, then ! for thou hast known,
And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,
Who, like his Border sires of old,
Waked a wild measure rude and bold,
Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,
With wonder heard the northern strain.¹
Come listen ! bold in thy applause,
The Bard shall scorn pedantic laws ;
And, as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and plann'd,
But yet so glowing and so grand,—
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry.

¹ [At Sunning-hill, Mr. Ellis's seat, near Windsor, part of the first two cantos of *Marmion* were written.]

M A R M I O N.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Court.

THE train has left the hills of Braid ;
The barrier guard have open made
(So Lindesay bade) the palisade,
That closed the tented ground ;
Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through,
Into its ample bound.
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the Southern band to stare.
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes ;
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge, that many simply thought,
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought ;
And little deem'd their force to feel,
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were actually used. Thus, at the battle of Blackheath, between the troops of Henry VII., and the Cornish insurgents, in 1496, the bridge of Dartford was defended by a picked band of archers from the rebel army, "whose arrows," says Holinshed, "were in length a full cloth yard." The Scottish, according to Ascham, had a proverb, that every English archer carried under his belt twenty-four Scots, in allusion to his bundle of unerring shafts. ●

II

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
 Glance every line and squadron through ;
 And much he marvell'd one small land
 Could marshal forth such various band :

For men-at-arms were here,
 Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
 Like iron towers for strength and weight,
 On Flemish steeds of bone and height,

With battle-axe and spear.

Young knights and squires, a lighter train
 Practised their chargers on the plain,
 By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,

Each warlike feat to show,
 To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
 And high curvett, that not in vain
 The sword sway might descend amain

On foeman's casque below.

He saw the hardy burghers there
 March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare, ¹

For vizor they wore none,
 Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight ;
 But burnish'd were their corslets bright,
 Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
 Like very silver shone.

Long pikes they had for standing fight,

Two-handed swords they wore,
 And many wielded mace of weight,
 And bucklers bright they bore.

¹ The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100: their armour to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats*, i.e., bright steel caps, without crest or visor. By an act of James IV., their *weapen-scharings* are appointed to be held four times a year under the aldermen or bailiffs.

III.

On foot the yeoman too, but dress'd
In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
 With iron quilted well ;
Each at his back (a slender store)
His forty days' provision bore,
 As feudal statutes tell.
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,¹
A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
 A dagger-knife, and brand.
Sober he seem'd, and sad of cheer,
As loath to leave his cottage dear,
And march to foreign strand ;
Or musing, who would guide his steer,
 To till the fallow land.
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
Did aught of dastard terror lie ;
 More dreadful far his ire,
Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
In eager mood to battle came,
Their valour like light straw on flame,
 A fierce but fading fire.

¹ Bows and quivers were in vain recommended to the peasantry of Scotland, by repeated statutes : spears and axes seem universally to have been used instead of them. Their defensive armour was the plate-jack, hauberk, or brigantine ; and their missile weapons crossbows and culverins. All wore swords of excellent temper, according to Patten ; and a voluminous handkerchief round their neck, "not for cold, but for cutting." The mace also was much used in the Scottish army : The old poem on the battle of Flodden mentions a band—

“ Who manfully did meet their foes,
 With leaden mauls, and lances lon .”

When the feudal array of the kingdom was called forth, each man was obliged to appear with forty days' provision. When this was expended, which took place before the battle of Flodden, the army melted away of course. Almost all the Scottish forces, except a few knights, men-at-arms, and the Border-prickers, who formed excellent light-cavalry, acted upon foot.

IV.

Not so the Borderer :—bred to war,
He knew the battle's din afar,
 And joy'd to hear it swell.
His peaceful day was slothful ease ;
Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please,
 Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and blade,
The light-arm'd pricker plied his trade,—
 Let nobles fight for fame ;
Let vassals follow where they lead,
Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,
 But war's the Borderer's game.
Their gain, their glory, their delight,
To sleep the day, maraud the night,
 O'er mountain, moss, and moor ;
Joyful to fight, they took their way,
Scarce caring who might win the day,
 Their booty was secure.
These, as Lord Marmion's train pass'd by,
Look'd on at first with careless eye,
Nor marvell'd aught, well taught to know
The form and force of English bow.
But when they saw the Lord array'd
In splendid arms, and rich brocade,
Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—
“ Hist, Ringan ! seest thou there !
Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride ?—
O ! could we but on Border side
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
 Beset a prize so fair !
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistening hide ;
Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,
 Could make a kirtle rare.”

V

Next, Marmion mark'd the Celtic race,
Of different language, form, and face,
A various race of man ;
Just then the Chiefs their tribes array'd,
And wild and garish semblance made,
The chequer'd trews and belted plaid,
And varying notes the war-pipes bray'd,
To every varying clan !
Wild through their red or sable hair
Look'd out their eyes with savage stare,
On Marmion as he pass'd ;
Their legs above the knee were bare ;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
And harden'd to the blast ;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red-deer's undress'd hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied ;
The graceful bonnet deck'd their head :
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid ;
A broadsword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O !
Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe.
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
And, with their cries discordant mix'd,
Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt.

VI.

Thus through the Scottish camp they pass'd,
 And reach'd the City gate at last,
 Where all around, a wakeful guard,
 Arm'd burghers kept their watch and ward.
 Well had they cause of jealous fear,
 When lay encamp'd, in field so near,
 The Borderer and the Mountaineer.
 As through the bustling streets they go,
 All was alive with martial show :
 At every turn, with dinning clang,
 The armourer's anvil clash'd and rang ;
 Or toil'd the swarthy smith, to wheel
 The bar that arms the charger's heel ;
 Or axe, or falchion, to the side
 Of jarring grindstone was applied.
 Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
 Through street, and lane, and market-place,
 Bore lance, or casque, or sword ;
 While burghers, with important face,
 Described each new-come lord,
 Discuss'd his lineage, told his name,
 His following,¹ and his warlike fame.
 The Lion led to lodging meet,
 Which high o'erlook'd the crowded street ;
 There must the Baron rest,
 Till past the hour of vesper tide,
 And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
 Such was the King's behest.
 Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
 A banquet rich, and costly wines,
 To Marmion and his train ;²

¹ *Following*.—Feudal retainers.

² In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was a uniform and

And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The Baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads,
The palace-halls they gain.

VII.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,
That night, with wassell, mirth, and glee :
King James within her princely bower
Feasted the Chiefs of Scotland's power;
Summon'd to spend the parting hour ;
For he had charged, that his array
Should southward march by break of day.
Well loved that splendid monarch aye
The banquet and the song,
By day the journey, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.
This feast outshone his banquets past ;
It was his blithest;—and his last.
The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
Cast on the Court a dancing ray ;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing ;
There ladies touched a softer string ;
With long-ear'd cap, and motley vest,
The licensed fool retail'd his jest ;
His magic tricks the juggler plied ;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied ;

indispensable preliminary. It was not to Sir John Falstaff alone that such an introductory preface was necessary, however well judged and acceptable on the part of Mr. Brook ; for Sir Ralph Sadler, while on an embassy to Scotland in 1539-40, mentions, with complacency, "the same night came Rothesay (the herald so called) to me again, and brought me wine from the King, both white and red."—*Clifford's Edition*, p. 39.

While some, in close recess apart,
Court'd the ladies of their heart,
Nor court'd them in vain ;
For often, in the parting hour,
Victorious Love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain ;
And flinty is her heart, can view
To battle march a lover true—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

VIII.

Though this mix'd crowd of glee and game,
The King to greet Lord Marmion came,
While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doff'd, to Marmion bending low,
His broder'd cap and plume.
For royal was his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimm'd with the fur of martin wild ;
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled ;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown :
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldrick bright ;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel ;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was button'd with a ruby rare :
And Marmion deem'd he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX.

The Monarch's form was middle size ;
For fear of strength, or exercise,
 Shaped in proportion fair ;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye,
 His short curl'd beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
 And firm his stirrup in the lists ;
And, oh ! he had that merry glance,
 That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue ;—
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

 I said he joy'd in banquet bower ;
But, 'mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,
How suddenly his cheer would change,
 His look o'ercast and lower,
If, in a sudden turn, he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.¹
Even so 'twas strange how, evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er

¹ Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which James added certain ounces every year that he lived. Pitscottie founds his belief, that James was not slain in the battle of Flodden, because the English never had this token of the iron-belt to show to any Scottishman. The person and character of James are delineated according to our best historians. His romantic disposition, which led him highly to relish gaiety, approaching to license, was, at the same time, tinged with enthusiastic devotion. These propensities sometimes formed a strange contrast. He was wont, during his fits of devotion, to assume the dress, and conform to the rules, of the order of Franciscans ; and when he had thus done penance for some time in Stirling, to plunge again into the tide of pleasure. Probably, too, with no unusual inconsistency, he sometimes laughed at the superstitious observances to which he at other times subjected himself.

Forward he rush'd, with double glee,
 Into the stream of revelry :
 Thus, dim-seen object of affright
 Startles the courser in his flight,
 And half he halts, half springs aside ;
 But feels the quickening spur applied,
 And, straining on the tighten'd rein,
 Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

X.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
 Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway :¹
 To Scotland's Court she came,
 To be a hostage for her lord,
 Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,
 And with the King to make accord,
 Had sent his lovely dame.
 Nor to that lady free alone
 Did the gay King allegiance own ;
 For the fair Queen of France
 Sent him a turquois ring and glove,
 And charged him, as her knight and love,
 For her to break a lance ;
 And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
 And march three miles on Southron land,
 And bid the banners of his band
 In English breezes dance.
 And thus, for France's Queen he drest
 His manly limbs in mailed vest ;
 And thus admitted English fair
 His inmost counsels still to share ;

¹ [See Note 20.]

² A turquois ring ; probably this fatal gift is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the College of Heralds, London.

And thus, for both, he madly plann'd
The ruin of himself and land !
And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair, nor France's Queen.
Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and sheen,
From Margaret's eyes that fell,—
His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

XI.

The Queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil,
Her Monarch's risk in battle broil :—
And in gay Holy-rood, the while,
Dame Heron rises with a smile
Upon the harp to play.
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
The strings her fingers flew ;
And as she touch'd and tuned them all
Ever her bosom's rise and fall
Was plainer given to view ;
For, all for heat, was laid aside
Her wimple, and her hood untied.
And first she pitch'd her voice to sing,
Then glanced her dark eye on the King,
And then around the silent ring,
And laugh'd, and blush'd, and oft did say
Her pretty oath, by Yea, and Nay,
She could not, would not, durst not play !
At length, upon the harp, with glee,
Mingled with arch simplicity,
A soft, yet lively, air she rung,
While thus the wily lady sung :—

XII.

LOCHINVAR.

Lady Heron's Song.

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
 Through all the wide Border his steed was the best ;
 And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,
 He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone,
 So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
 There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
 He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
 The bride had consented, the gallant came late :
 For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
 Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
 (For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
 " O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ?"—

" I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied ;—
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—¹
 And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
 There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet : the knight took it up,
 He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.

¹ [See the novel of Redgauntlet, Paterson's "Edinburgh Edition," vol. xviii. for a detailed picture of some of the extraordinary phenomena of the spring-tides in the Solway Frith.]

She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
“Now tread we a measure!” said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and
plume ;
And the bride-maidens whisper'd, “’Twere better by far,
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.”

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger stood
near ;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung !
“She is won ! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur ;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow,” cried young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby
clan ;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they
ran :
There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ?

XIII.

The Monarch o'er the siren hung,
And beat the measure as she sung ;

And, pressing closer, and more near,
He whisper'd praises in her ear.
In loud applause the courtiers vied ;
And ladies wink'd, and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seem'd to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest too,
A real or feigned disdain :
Familiar was the look, and told,
Marmion and she were friends of old.
The King observed their meeting eyes,
With something like displeased surprise ;
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
Even in a word, or smile, or look.
Straight took he forth the parchment broad,
Which Marmion's high commission show'd :
"Our Borders sack'd by many a raid,
Our peaceful liege-men robb'd," he said :
"On day of truce our Warden slain,
Stout Barton kill'd, his vassals ta'en—
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain ;
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
Our herald has to Henry borne."

XIV.

He paused, and led where Douglas stood,
And with stern eye the pageant view'd :
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
Who coronet of Angus bore,
And, when his blood and heart were high,
Did the third James in camp defy,
And all his minions led to die
On Lauder's dreary flat :

Princes and favorites long grew tame,
And trembled at the homely name
Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat ;¹
The same who left the dusky vale
Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,
Its dungeons and its towers,
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
To fix his princely bowers.
Though now, in age, he had laid down
His armour for the peaceful gown,
And for a staff his brand,
Yet often would flash forth the fire,
That could, in youth, a monarch's ire
And minion's pride withstand ;
And even that day, at council board,
Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,
Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal Lord.

XV.

His giant-form, like ruined tower,
Though fall'n its muscles' brawny vant,
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
Seem'd o'er the gaudy scene to lower :
His locks and beard in silver grew ;
His eyebrows kept their sable hue.

¹ [See Note 21.]

² Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely upon the impolicy of fighting, that the King said to him, with scorn and indignation, "if he was afraid, he might go home." The Earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons, George, Master of Angus, and Sir William of Glenbevis, to command his followers. They were both slain in the battle, with two hundred gentlemen of the name of Douglas. The aged Earl, broken-hearted at the calamities of his house and his country, retired into a religious house, where he died about a year after the field of Flodden.

Near Douglas when the Monarch stood,
 His bitter speech he thus pursued ;—
 “ Lord Marmion, since these letters say
 That in the North you needs must stay,
 While slightest hopes of peace remain,
 Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
 To say—Return to Lindisfarne,
 Until my herald come again.—
 Then rest you on Tantallon Hold ;¹
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
 A chief unlike his sires of old.
 He wears their motto on his blade,²
 Their blazon o’er his towers display’d ;
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,
 More than to face his country’s foes.
 And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,
 But e’en this morn to me was given
 A prize, the first fruits of the war,
 Ta’en by a galley from Dunbar,
 A bevy of the maids of Heaven.
 Under your guard, these holy maids
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,
 Requiem for Cochran’s soul may say.”
 And, with the slaughter’d favourite’s name,
 Across the Monarch’s brow there came,
 A cloud of ire, remorse and shame.

XVI.

In answer nought could Angus speak ;
 His proud heart swell’d wellnigh to break :
 He turn’d aside, and down his cheek
 A burning tear there stole.

¹ [See Note 22.]² [See Note 23.]

His hand the Monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could not brook,

“ Now by the Bruce’s soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive !
For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old.

I well may say of you,—
That never King did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more bold,
More tender and more true :
Forgive me, Douglas, once again.”—
And, while the King his hand did strain,
The old man’s tears fell down like rain.
To seize the moment Marmion tried,
And whisper’d to the King aside :
‘ Oh ! let such tears unwonted plead
For respite short from dubious deed !
A child will weep a bramble’s smart,
A maid to see her sparrow part,
A stripling for a woman’s heart,
But woe awaits a country, when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, oh ! what omen, dark and high,
When Douglas wets his manly eye ! ”

XVII.

Displeased was James, that stranger view’d
And tamper’d with his changing mood.
“ Laugh those that can, weep those that may.”
Thus did the fiery Monarch say,
“ Southward I march by break of day ;
And if within Tantallon strong,
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle-hall.”—

The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answered, grave, the royal vaunt ;
“ Much honour'd were my humble home ;
If in its halls King James should come ;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood ;
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby Hills the paths are steep ;
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep ;
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's King shall cross the Trent :
Yet pause, brave Prince, while yet you may !”—
The Monarch lightly turn'd away,
And to his nobles loud did call,—
“ Lords, to the dance,—a hall ! a hall ? ”¹
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led Dame Heron gallantly ;
And Minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out—“ Blue Bonnets o'er the Border.”

XVIII.

Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sail'd again,
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
Till James should of their fate decide ;
And soon, by his command,
Were gently summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honour'd, safe, and fair,
Again, to English land.

¹ The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

The Abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which Saint she should implore ;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore
 She fear'd Lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt !
The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
 Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly, King James had given,
 As guard to Whithy's shades,
The man most dreaded under heaven
 By these defenceless maids :
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
Mid bustle of a war begun ?
They deem'd it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX.

Their lodging, so the King assign'd,
To Marmion's, as their guardian, join'd ;
And thus it fell, that passing nigh,
The Palmer caught the Abbess' eye,
 Who warn'd him by a scroll,
She had a secret to reveal,
That much concern'd the Church's weal,
 And health of sinner's soul ;
And, with deep charge of secrecy,
 She named a place to meet,
Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
 Above the stately street ;
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

XX.

At night, in secret, there they came,
The Palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rose high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before,
Did din of war and warriors roar,
 You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
 An owlet flap his boding wing
 On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
 Were here wrapt deep in shade ;
Tthere on their brows the moon-beam broke,
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
 And on the casements play'd.
 And other light was none to see.
 Save torches gliding far,
 Before some chieftain of degree,
 Who left the royal revelry,
 To bowne him for the war.—
A solemn scene the Abbess chose ;
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

XXI.

“O, holy P'almer !” she began,—
“For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground,
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—
 For His dear Church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love,—
How vain to those who wed above !—



LINLITHGOW

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile, and weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil, her Monarch's risk in battle-broil.
From the drawing by Geo. Cattermole. Marion, p. 151

De Wilton and Lord Marmion woo'd
 Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood ;
 (Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
 To say of that same blood I came ;)
 And once, when jealous rage was high,
 Lord Marmion said despicablely,
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,
 And had made league with Martin Swart,
 When he came here on Simnel's part ;
 And only cowardice did restrain
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
 And down he threw his glove :—the thing
 Was tried, as wont, before the King ;
 Where frankly did De Wilton own,
 That Swart in Guelders he had known ;
 And that between them then there went
 Some scroll of courteous compliment.
 For this he to his castle sent ;
 But when his messenger return'd,
 Judge how De Wilton's fury burn'd !
 For in his packet there were laid
 Letters that claim'd disloyal aid,
 And prov'd King Henry's cause betray'd.
 His fame, thus blighted, in the field
 He strove to clear, by spear and shield ;—
 To clear his fame, in vain he strove,
 For wondrous are His ways above !
 Perchance some form was unobserved ;
 Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerv'd ;²
 Else how could guiltless champion quail,
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail ?

¹ A German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy with Lambert Simnel. He was defeated and killed at Stokefield. The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor.—There were songs about him long current in England.—See Dissertation prefixed to RITSON'S *Ancient Songs*, 1792, p. lxi.

² It was early necessary for those who felt themselves obliged to believe in the divine judgment being enunciated in the trial by duel, to find salvos for,

XXII.

"His squire, who now De Wilton saw
 As recreant doom'd to suffer law,
 Repentant, own'd in vain,
 That, while he had the scrolls in care,
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,
 Had drench'd him with a beverage rare ;
 His words no faith could gain.
 With Clare alone he credence won,
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
 To give our house her livings fair,
 And die a vestal vot'ress there.
 The impulse from the earth was given,
 But bent her to the paths of heaven.
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
 Ne'er shelter'd her in Whitby's shade,
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled ;
 Only one trace of earthly strain,
 That for her lover's loss
 She cherishes a sorrow vain,
 And murmurs at the Cross.—
 And then her heritage ;—it goes
 Along the banks of Tame ;
 Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
 In meadows rich the heifer lows,
 The falconer and huntsman knows
 Its woodlands for the game.

the strange and obviously precarious chances of the combat. Various curious evasive shifts, used by those who took up an upright quarrel, were supposed sufficient to convert it into a just one. Thus, in the romance of "Amys and Amielion," the one brother-in-arms, fighting for the other, disguised in his armour, swears that *he* did not commit the crime of which the Steward, his antagonist, truly, though maliciously, accused him whom he represented. Brantome tells the story of an Italian, who entered the lists upon an unjust quarrel, but, to make his cause good, fled from his enemy at the first onset. "Furn, coward!" exclaimed his antagonist. "Thou liest," said the Italian, "coward am I none; and in this quarrel will I fight to the death, but my first cause of combat was unjust, and I abandon it."

Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
And I; her humble vot'ress here,
Should do a deadly sin,
Her temple spoil'd before mine eyes.
If this false Marmion such a prize
By my consent should win ;
Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn,
That Clare shall from our house be torn ;
And grievous cause have I to fear,
Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

XXIII.

" Now, prisoner, helpless and betray'd
To evil power, I claim thine aid,
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the Church of God !
For mark :—When Wilton was betray'd,
And with his squire forged letters laid,
She was, alas ! that sinful maid,
By whom the deed was done,—
O ! shame and horror to be said !—
She was a perjured nun !
No clerk in all the land, like her,
Traced quaint and varying character.
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's paramour
(For such vile thing she was) should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour ;
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power :
For this she secretly retain'd,

Each proof that might the plot reveal,
 Instructions with his hand and seal !
 And thus Saint Hilda deign'd,
 Through sinners' perfidy impure,
 Her house's glory to secure,
 And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV.

" 'Twere long and needless, here to tell,
 How to my hand these papers fell ;
 With me they must not stay.
 Saint Hilda keep her Abbess true !
 Who knows what outrage he might do,
 While journeying by the way ?—
 O, blessed Saint, if e'er again
 I venturous leave thy calm domain,
 To travel or by land or main,
 Deep penance may I pay :—
 Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer :
 I give this packet to thy care,
 For thee to stop they will not dare ;
 And O ! with cautious speed,
 To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
 That he may show them to the King :
 And, for thy well-earn'd meed,
 Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
 A weekly mass shall still be thine,
 While priests can sing and read.—
 What ail'st thou ?—Speak !"—For as he took
 The charge, a strong emotion shook
 His frame ; and, ere reply,
 They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
 Like distant clarion feebly blown,
 That on the breeze did die ;
 And loud the Abbess shriek'd in fear,
 " Saint Withold, save us !—What is here !

Look at yon City Cross !
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
And blazon'd banners toss !"—

XXV.

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,
Rose on a turret octagon ;
 (But now is razed that monument,
 Whence royal edict rang,
 And voice of Scotland's law was sent
 In glorious trumpet-clang.
O ! be his tomb as lead to lead,
Upon its dull destroyer's head !—
A minstrel's malison ¹ is said,²)—
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing Nature's law,
 Strange, wild, and dimly seen ;
Figures that seem'd to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirm'd could ear or eye
 Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem, as there
Heralds and Pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound, and blazon fair,
 A summons to proclaim ;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
When flings the moon upon her shroud
 A wavering tinge of flame ;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midmost of the spectre crowd,
 This awful summons came :—³

i.e. Curse.² [See Note 24.]³ [See Note 25.]

XXVI.

“Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,

Whose names I now shall call,

Scottish, or foreigner, give ear !

Subjects of him who sent me here,

At his tribunal to appear,

I summon one and all :

I cite you by each deadly sin,

That e'er hath soil'd your hearts within ;

I cite you by each brutal lust,

That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—

By wrath, by pride, by fear,

By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,

By the dark grave, and dying groan !

When forty days are pass'd and gone,

I cite you, at your Monarch's throne,

To answer and appear.”—

Then thunder'd forth a roll of names :—

The first was thine, unhappy James !

Then all thy nobles came ;

Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,

Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—

Why should I tell their separate style ?

Each chief of birth and fame,

Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,

Fore-doom'd to Flodden's carnage pile,

Was cited there by name ;

And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,

Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye ;

De Wilton, erst of Aberley,

The self-same thundering voice did say.—

But then another spoke :

“Thy fatal summons I deny,

And thine infernal Lord defy,

Appealing me to Him on High,

Who burst the sinner's yoke.”

At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the Abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell.
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She mark'd not, at the scene aghast,
What time, or how, the Palmer pass'd.

XXVII.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move,
Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
She grey-hair'd sire, with pious care,
To chapels and to shrines repair—
Where is the Palmer now? and where
The Abbess, Marmion, and Clare?—
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge:
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The Palmer still was with the band;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command,
That none should roam at large.
But in that Palmer's alter'd mien
A wondrous change might now be seen,
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand,
When lifted for a native land;
And still look'd high, as if he plann'd
Some desperate deed afar.

His courser would he feed and stroke,
And, tucking up his sable frocke,
Would first his mettle bold provoke
Then soothe or quell his pride.
Old Hubert said, that never one
He saw, except Lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII.

So me half-hour's march behind, there came,
By Eustace govern'd fair,
A troop escorting Hilda's Dame,
With all her nuns, and Clare.
No audience had Lord Marmion sought ;
Ever he fear'd to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate ;
And safer 'twas, he thought,
To wait till, from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,
Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fann'd by looks and sighs,
And lighted oft at lady's eyes ;
He long'd to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land :
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness won
He almost loath'd to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause,
Which made him burst through honour's laws
If e'er he lov'd, 'twas her alone,
Who died within that vault of stone.



BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

And now, when close at hand they saw
North Berwick's town, and Jolly Law,
Tutze-East we bade them pause a while; - *Mornington*, p. 139

From the picture by J. M. W. Turner, Esq.

XXIX.

And now, when close at hand they saw
North Berwick's town, and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause a while,
Before a venerable pile,¹

Whose turrets view'd, afar,
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.

At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable Dame,
And pray'd Saint Hilda's Abbess rest
With her, a loved and honour'd guest,
Till Douglas should a bark prepare
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the Abbess, you may guess,
And thank'd the Scottish Prioress ;
And tedious were to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that pass'd between.

O'erjoy'd the nuns their palfreys leave ;
But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said,—“ I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part ;—

Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obey'd ;
And Marmion and the Douglas said,
That you must wend with me.

Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish Earl he show'd,
Commanding, that, beneath his care,
Without delay, you shall repair
To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.”

The convent alluded to is a foundation of Cistercian nuns, near North Berwick, of which there are still some remains. It was founded by Duncan Earl of Fife, in 1216.

XXX.

The startled Abbess loud exclaim'd ;
But she, at whom the blow was aim'd,
Grew pale as death, and cold as lead,—
She deem'd she heard her death-doom read
“Cheer thee, my child !” the Abbess said,
“They dare not tear thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armed band.”—

“Nay, holy mother, nay,”

Fitz-Eustace said, “the lovely Clare
Will be in Lady Angus’ care,

In Scotland while we stay ;
And, when we move, an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,
Female attendance to provide

Befitting Gloster’s heir ;
Nor thinks, nor dreams, my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass Lady Clare.

Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy

That e’en to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her, safe and free,
Within her kinsman’s halls.’

He spoke, and blush’d with earnest grace ;
His faith was painted on his face,

And Clare’s worst fear relieved.
The Lady Abbess loud exclaim’d
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
Entreated, threaten’d, grieved ;

To martyr, saint, and prophet pray’d,
Against Lord Marmion inveig’d,
And call’d the Prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.
Her head the grave Cistercian shook :

"The Douglas, and the King," she said,
"In their commands will be obey'd ;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon hall."

XXXI.

The Abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—
For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And—" Bid," in solemn voice she said,
"Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he shall there written see,
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the Monks forth of Coventry,¹
Bid him his fate explore !
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurl'd him to the dust,
And, by a base plebian thrust,
He died his band before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me ;
He is a Chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse ;
Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise :

¹ This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of King Stephen, whom William of Newbury describes with some attributes of my fictitious hero:—" *Homo bellicosus, ferocia, et astucia, fere nullo suo tempore impar.*" This Baron, having expelled the Monks from the church of Coventry, was not long of experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks, no doubt, termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the Earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop, against a body of the Earl's followers; the rider's thigh being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour. The whole story is told by William of Newbury.

For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah"—
Here hasty Blount broke in :
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band !
St. Anton' fire thee ! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the Lady preach ?
By this good light ! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, d'on thy cap, and mount thy horse ;
The Dame must patience take perforce."—

XXXII.

"Submit we then to force," said Clare,
"But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win ;
Let him take living, land, and life ;
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin :
And if it be the King's decree,
That I must find no sanctuary,
In that inviolable dome,
Where even a homicide might come,
And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
The kinsmen of the dead ;
Yet one asylum is my own
Against the dreaded hour ;
A low, a silent, and a lone,
Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.—

Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare !”
Loud weeps the Abbess, and bestows
Kind blessings many a one :
Weeping and wailing loud arose,
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And, by each courteous word and deed,
To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII.

But scant three miles the band had rold,
When o'er a height they pass'd,
And, sudden, close before them show'd
His towers, Tantallon vast;
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows,
The fourth did battled walls enclose,
And double mound and fosse.¹

¹ [“During the regency (subsequent to the death of James V.) the Dowager Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, became desirous of putting a French garrison into Tantallon, as she had into Dunbar and Inchkeith, in order the better to bridle the lords and barons, who inclined to the reformed faith, and to secure by citadels the sea-coast of the Frith of Forth. For this purpose, the Regent, to use the phrase of the time, ‘dealed with’ the (then) Earl of Angus for his consent to the proposed measure. He occupied himself, while she was speaking, in feeding a falcon which sat upon his wrist, and only replied by addressing the bird, but leaving the Queen to make the application, ‘The devil is in this greedy gled—she will never be fou’. But when the Queen, without appearing to notice this hint, continued to press her obnoxious request, Angus replied, in the true spirit of a feudal noble, ‘Yes, Madame, the castle is yours; God forbid else. But by the might of God, Madame!’ such was his usual oath, ‘I must be your Captain and Keeper for you, and I will keep it as well as any you can place there.’”—SIR WALTER SCOTT’S *Provincial Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 167.]

By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance long,
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square :
Around were lodgings, fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far,
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
Whence oft the Warder could descry
The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV.

Here did they rest.—The princely care
Of Douglas, why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair?
Or why the tidings say,
Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts, or fleeter fame,
With every varying day?
And, first, they heard King James had won
Etall, and Wark, and Ford ; and then,
That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvell'd Marmion ;—
And Douglas hoped his Monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland :
But whisper'd news there came,
That, while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.—

Such acts to chronicles I yield ;
Go seek them there, and see :
Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
And not a history.—
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post,
Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain ;
And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gather'd in the Southern land,
And march'd into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe, and swear :—
“ A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle, like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near !
Needs must I see this battle-day :
Death to my fame if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away !
The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
Hath 'bated of his courtesy :
No longer in his halls I'll stay.”
Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH.

TO

RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun House,¹ Christmas.

HEAP on more wood !—the wind is chill ;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer :
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain ;²
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew ;

¹ [Mertoun-House, the seat of Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden, is beautifully situated on the Tweed, about two miles below Dryburgh Abbey.]

² The Iol of the heathen Danes (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland) was solemnized with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones ; and Torfæus tells a long and curious story, in the History of Hrolfe Kraka, of one Hottus, an inmate of the Court of Denmark, who was so generally assailed with these missiles, that he constructed, out of the bones with which he was overwhelmed, a very respectable intrenchment, against those who continued the raillery. The dances of the northern warriors round the great fires of pine-trees, are commemorated by Olaus Magnus, who says, they danced with such fury, holding each other by the hands, that, if the grasp of any failed, he was pitched into the fire with the velocity of a sling. The sufferer, on such occasions, was instantly plucked out, and obliged to quaff off a certain measure of ale, as a penalty for "spoiling the king's fire."

Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes deck'd the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer ;
Caroused in seas of sable beer ;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow-bone,
Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
While scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
While wildly-loose their red locks fly,
And dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious right
Gave honour to the holy night ;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung ;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung :
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen ;
The hall was dress'd with holly green ;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then open'd wide the Baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose ;

¹ In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, except on Christmas eve.

The Lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide ;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man ;
Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell ;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reek'd ; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie ;
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din ;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery ;¹

¹ It seems certain, that the *Mummers* of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless plough-share ; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old

White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smucted cheeks the visors made ;
But, O ! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light !
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
’Twas Christmas broach’d the mightiest ale ;
’Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man’s heart through half the year.

Still linger, in our northern clime,
Some remnants of the good old time ;
And still, within our valleys here,
We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when, perchance, its far-fetch’d claim
To Southron ear sounds empty name ;
For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
Is warmer than the mountain-stream.
And thus, my Christmas still I hold
Where my great grandsire came of old,
With amber beard, and flaxen hair,²
And reverend apostolic air—
The feast and holy tide to share,

mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland, (*me ipso teste*), we were wont, during my boyhood, to take the characters of the apostles, at least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot ; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours’ plumb cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes ; another was

“ Alexander, King of Macedon,
Who conquer’d all the world but Scotland alone ;
When he came to Scotland his courage grew cold,
To see a little nation courageous and bold.”

These, and many such verses, were repeated, but by rote, and unconnectedly. There was also, occasionally, I believe, a Saint George. In all, there was a confused resemblance of the ancient mysteries, in which the characters of Scripture, the Nine Worthies, and other popular personages, were usually exhibited.

¹ “ Blood is warmer than water,”—a proverb meant to vindicate our family predilections.

² [See Note 26.]

And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine :
Small thought was his, in after time
E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast,
That he was loyal to his cost ;
The banish'd race of kings revered,
And lost his land,—but kept his beard.

In these dear halls, where welcome kind
Is with fair liberty combined ;
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
And flies constraint the magic wand
Of the fair dame that rules the land.
Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social cheer,
Speed on their wings the passing year.
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now
When not a leaf is on the bough
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
As loath to leave the sweet domain,
And holds his mirror to her face,
And clips her with a close embrace :—
Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that, at this time of glee,
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee !
For many a merry hour we've known,
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
Cease, then, my friend ! a moment cease,
And leave these classic tomes in peace !
Of Roman and of Grecian lore,
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say
Were pretty fellows in their day ;”

But time and tide o'er all prevail—
 On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
 Of wonder and of war—"Profane !
 What ! leave the lofty Latian strain,
 Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
 To hear the clash of rusty arms :
 In Fairy Land or Limbo lost,
 To jostle conjurer or ghost,
 Goblin and witch !"—Nay, Heber dear,
 Before you touch my charter, hear ;
 Though Leyden aids, alas ! no more,
 My cause with many-languaged lore,¹
 This may I say :—in realms of death
 Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith* ;
 Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
 The ghost of murder'd Polydore ,
 For omens, we in Livy cross,
 At every turn, *locutus Bos*.
 As grave and duly speaks that ox,
 As if he told the price of stocks ;
 Or held, in Rome republican,
 The place of common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,
 Their legends wild of woe and fear.
 To Cambria look—the peasant see,
 Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
 And shun "the spirit's Blasted Tree."
 The Highlander, whose red claymore
 The battle turn'd on Maida's shore,
 Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
 If ask'd to tell a fairy tale :²

¹ John Leyden, M.D., sailed for India in April, 1803, and died at Java in August, 1811, before completing his 36th year.

² The *Daoine shé*, or *Men of Peace*, of the Scottish Highlanders, rather resemble the Scandinavian *Duergar*, than the English Fairies. Notwithstanding their name, they are, if not absolutely malevolent, at least peevish, discontented, and apt to do mischief on slight provocation. The belief of

He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
Who leaves that day his grassy ring ;
Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.

Did'st e'er, dear Heber, pass along
Beneath the towers of Franchémont,
Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hang o'er the stream and hamlet fair ?
Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
A mighty treasure buried lay,
Amass'd through rapine and through wrong
By the last Lord of Franchémont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A Huntsman sits, its constant guard ;
Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung ;
Before his feet his blood-hounds lie :
An 'twere not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
As true a huntsman doth he look,
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever hollow'd to a hound.
To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged Necromantic Priest ;
It is an hundred years at least,
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
And neither yet has lost nor won.
And oft the Conjuror's words will make
The stubborn Demon groan and quake ;

their existence is deeply impressed on the Highlanders, who think they are particularly offended at mortals, who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom, in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power. Some curious particulars concerning the popular superstitions of the Highlanders may be found in Dr. Graham's Picturesque Sketches of Perthshire.

And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
Fast as 'tis open'd, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom,
Unless the Adept shall learn to tell
The very work that clench'd the spell,
When Franch'mont lock'd the treasure cell.
An hundred years are pass'd and gone,
And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say ;
Whose gossip history has given,
My song the messenger from Heaven,¹
That warn'd, in Lithgow, Scotland's King,
Nor less the infernal summoning ;
May pass the Monk of Durham's tale,
Whose Demon fought in Gothic mail ;
May pardon plead for Fordun grave,
Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who, in an instant, can renew
Your treasured boards of various lore,
And furnish twenty thousand more ?
Hoard, not like theirs whose volumes rest
Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest,
While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use ;
Give them the priest's whole century,
They shall not spell yon letters three ;
Their pleasure in the books the same
The magpie takes in pilfer'd gem.

¹ [See Note 18.]

Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart ;
Yet who, of all who thus employ them,
Can like the owner's self enjoy them?—
But, hark ! I hear the distant drum !
The day of Flodden Field is come.—
Adieu, dear Heber ! life and health,
And store of literary wealth.



RUINS OF TANTALLON CASTLE

And, suddenly, close before them show'd his towers, Tantallon vest;
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far, and held impregnable in war.

Macrae, p. 173

From the painting by the Rev. John Thomson.

M A R M I O N .

CANTO SIXTH.

The Battle.

WHILE great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanour, changed and cold,
Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuff'd the battle from afar ;
And hopes were none, that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's King in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day ;
Whilst these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the dame's devotions share :
For the good Countess ceaseless pray'd
To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,
And, with short interval, did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high Baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified ;—
Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart,
The hours that she might spend apart.

II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repell'd the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
Above the rest, a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield ;
The Bloody Heart was in the Field,
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartisan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign ;
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement ;
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd
No need upon the sea-girt side ;
The steepy rock, and frantic tide,
Approach of human step denied ;
And thus these lines, and ramparts rude
Were left in deepest solitude.

III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry ;
Or low, like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark-grey bulwarks' side,
And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff, and swelling main,
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
A home she ne'er might see again ;
For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown :
It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—
Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
Again adorn'd her brow of snow ;
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground ;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remain'd a cross with ruby stone ;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er,
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dress'd,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woeful mien.

Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practice on the gull and crow,
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear,—
Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,
Or, in Romance, some spell-bound Queen ;
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV.

Once walking thus, at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—"The Abbess, there,
Perchance, does to her home repair ;
Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with Charity ;
Where oft Devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision, and deep mystery ;
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
O ! wherefore, to my duller eye,
Did still the Saint her form deny !
Was it, that, sear'd by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn ?
Or lie my warm affections low,
With him, that taught them first to glow ?
Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew,
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command,
That ruled thy simple maiden band.
How different now ! condemn'd to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.—

But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl,
From Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl :
Of such a stem, a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

v.

" But see !—what makes this armour here ?"—
For in her path there lay
Targe, corslet, helm ;—she view'd them near.—
" The breast-plate pierced !—Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton !—Oh ! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard,
On yon disastrous day !"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
WILTON himself before her stood !
It might have seem'd his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost ;
And joy unwonted, and surprise,
Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.—
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words :
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven ?
Far less can my weak line declare
Each changing passion's shade ;
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,

And joy, with her angelic air,
 And hope, that paints the future fair,
 Their varying hues display'd :
 Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
 Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
 Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
 And mighty Love retains the field.
 Shortly I tell what then he said,
 By many a tender word delay'd,
 And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
 And question kind, and fond reply :—

VI.

De Wilton's History.

“ Forget we that disastrous day,
 When senseless in the lists I lay,
 Thence dragg'd,—but how I cannot know
 For sense and recollection fled,—
 I found me on a pallet low,
 Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
 Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
 How thou didst blush, when the old man,
 When first our infant love began,
 Said we would make a matchless pair?—
 Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
 From the degraded traitor's bed,—
 He only held my burning head,
 And tended me for many a day,
 While wounds and fever held their sway.
 But far more needful was his care,
 When sense return'd to wake despair ;
 For I did tear the closing wound,
 And dash me frantic on the ground,
 If e'er I heard the name of Clare.

At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
 With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds array'd,
My hated name and form to shade,
 I journey'd many a land ;
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
 Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,
When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
 Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.
My friend at length fell sick, and said,
 God would remove him soon :
And, while upon his dying bed,
 He begg'd of me a boon—
If e'er my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,
Even then my mercy should awake,
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII.

“ Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
 Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perish'd of my wound,—
 None cared which tale was true :
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his Palmer's dress ;
For now that sable slough is shed,
And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.

A chance most wondrous did provide,
 That I should be that Baron's guide—
 I will not name his name !—
 Vengeance to God alone belongs ;
 But, when I think on all my wrongs,
 My blood is liquid flame !
 And ne'er the time shall I forget,
 When, in a Scottish hostel set,
 Dark looks we did exchange :
 What were his thoughts I cannot tell ;
 But in my bosom muster'd Hell
 Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII.

“ A word of vulgar augury,
 That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
 Brought on a village tale ;
 Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
 And sent him armed forth by night.
 I borrow'd steel and mail,
 And weapons, from his sleeping band ;
 And, passing from a postern door,
 We met, and 'countered, hand to hand,—
 He fell on Gifford-moor.
 For the death-stroke my brand I drew,
 (O then my helmed head he knew,
 The Palmer's cowl was gone,)
 Then had three inches of my blade
 The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
 My hand the thought of Austin staid ;
 I left him there alone.—
 O good old man ! even from the grave,
 Thy spirit could thy master save :
 If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
 Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,
 Given to my hand this packet dear,

Of power to clear my injured fame,
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
Perchance you heard the Abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of Hell,
That broke our secret speech—
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or featly was some juggle play'd,
A tale of peace to teach.
Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,
When my name came among the rest.

IX.

“ Now here, within Tantallon Hold,
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
When the Dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave—his armourer's care,
Ere morn, shall every breach repair ;
For nought, he said, was in his halls,
But ancient armour on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and grey-hair'd men ;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.¹
And now I watch my armour here,
By law of arms, till midnight's near ;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

¹ Where James encamped before taking post on Flodden.

X.

“ There soon again we met, my Clare !
This Baron means to guide thee there :
Douglas reveres his King’s command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
Once more ”——“ O Wilton ! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more ?
And is there not an humble glen,
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor ?——
That reddening brow !—too well I know,
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
While falsehood stains thy name :
Go then to fight ! Clare bids thee go !
Clare can a warrior’s feelings know,
And weep a warrior’s shame :
Can Red Earl Gilbert’s spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame ! ”

XI.

That night, upon the rocks and bay,
The midnight moon-beam slumbering lay,
And pour’d its silver light, and pure,
Through loop-hole, and through embrasure,

Upon Tantallon tower and hall ;
But chief where arched windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride,
The sober glances fall.
Much was there need ; though scam'd with scars,
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
Though two grey priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.
Amid that dim and smoky light,
Chequering the silvery moon-shine bright,
A bishop by the altar stood,¹
A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre green, and roquet white.
Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy ;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld,
Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doff'd his furr'd gown, and sable hood :
O'er his huge form and visage pale,
He wore a cap and shirt of mail ;
And lean'd his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.²

¹ The well known Gawain Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, son of Archibald Bell-the-Cat, Earl of Angus. He was author of a Scottish metrical version of the *Æneid*, and of many other poetical pieces of great merit. He had not at this period obtained the mitre.

² Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage. Spens of Kilsplindie, a favourite of James IV., having spoken of him lightly, the Earl met him while hawking, and, compelling him to single combat, at one blow cut asunder his thighbone, and killed him on the spot. But ere

He seem'd as, from the tombs around
Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be found
In all his old array ;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels ;
And think what next he must have felt,
At buckling of the falchion belt !
And judge how Clara changed her hue,
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,
He once had found untrue !
Then Douglas struck him with his blade :
" Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !
For King, for Church, for Lady fair,
See that thou fight."—
And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said—" Wilton ! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble ;
For He, who honour best bestows,
May give thee double."—
De Wilton sobb'd, for sob he must—
" Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust
That Douglas is my brother !"—

he could obtain James's pardon for this slaughter, Angus was obliged to yield his castle of Hermitage, in exchange for that of Bothwell, which was some diminution to the family greatness. The sword with which he struck so remarkable a blow, was presented by his descendant, James, Earl of Morton, afterwards Regent of Scotland, to Lord Lindsay of the Byres, when he defied Bothwell to single combat on Carberry-hill.

“Nay, nay,” old Angus said, “not so ;
To Surrey’s camp thou now must go,
Thy wrongs no longer smother,,
I have two sons in yonder field ;
And, if thou meet’st them under shield,
Upon them bravely—do thy worst ;
And foul fall him that blenches first !”

XIII.

Not far advanced was morning-day,
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey’s camp to ride ;
He had safe conduct for his band,
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide :
The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whisper’d in an under tone,
“Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown.”—
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopp’d to bid adieu :—
“Though something I might plain,” he said,
“Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your King’s behest,
While in Tantallon’s towers I staid ;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble Earl, receive my hand.”—
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke :—
“My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my Sovereign’s will,
To each one whom he lists, howe’er
Unmeet to be the owner’s peer.
My castles are my King’s alone,

From turret to foundation-stone—
The hand of Douglas is his own ;
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp.”—

XIV.

Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And—“ This to me ! ” he said,—
“ An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head !
And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate :
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
Even in thy pitch of pride,
Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,
(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied !
And if thou said'st, I am not peer,
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or Highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied ! ”—
On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
Fierce he broke forth,—“ And darrest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall ?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go ?—
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, Warder, ho !
Let the portcullis fall.”—¹

¹ [See Note 27.]

Lord Marmion turn'd,—well was his need,
And dash'd the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous grate behind him rung :
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise ;
Nor lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim :
And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
“Horse! horse!” the Douglas cried, “and
chase!”
But soon he rein'd his fury's pace :
“A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed?¹
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the King praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line :

¹ Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment, and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda, which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward IV. to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs.

So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.
'Tis pity of him too," he cried :
" Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,
I warrant him a warrior tried."
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore ;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They cross'd the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scann'd,
And miss'd the Palmer from the band.—
" Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
" He parted at the peep of day ;
Good sooth, it was in strange array."—
" In what array ?" said Marmion, quick.
" My Lord, I ill can spell the trick ;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang ;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air ;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk :
Last night it hung not in the hall ;
I thought some marvel would befall.



THE LADY CLARE

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry.

Murmion, p. 187

From the drawing by Thomas Phillips, R.A.

And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed ;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say
The Earl did much the Master ¹ pray
To use him on the battle-day ;
But he preferr'd "——" Nay, Henry, cease !
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.—
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day?"—

XVII.

"In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For then I stood by Henry's side)
The Palmer mount, and outwards ride,
Upon the Earl's own favourite steed :
All sheathed he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight :
Lord Angus wish'd him speed."—
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke ;—
"Ah ! dastard fool, to reason lost !"
He muttered ; "'Twas nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.—
O dotage blind and gross !
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now ?—he told his tale
To Douglas ; and with some avail ;

¹ His eldest son, the Master of Angus.

'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow.—
 Will Surrey dare to entertain,
 'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
 Small risk of that, I trow.
 Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun ;
 Must separate Constance from the Nun—
 O, what a tangled web we weave,
 When first we practise to deceive !
 A Palmer too !—no wonder why
 I felt rebuked beneath his eye :
 I might have known there was but one,
 Whose look could quell Lord Marmion.

XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
 His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,
 Where Lennel's convent¹ closed their march ;
 (There now is left but one frail arch,
 Yet mourn thou not its cells ;
 Our time a fair exchange has made ;
 Hard by, in hospitable shade,
 A reverend pilgrim dwells,
 Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
 That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)
 Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there
 Give Marmion entertainment fair,
 And lodging for his train and Clare.
 Next morn the Baron climb'd the tower,
 To view afar the Scottish power,
 Encamp'd on Flodden edge :

¹ This was a Cistercian house of religion, now almost entirely demolished. Lennel House is now the residence of my venerable friend, Patrick Brydone, Esquire, so well known in the literary world. It is situated near Coldstream, almost opposite to Cornhill, and consequently very near to Flodden Field.

The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.
Long Marmion look'd :—at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry
Amid the shifting lines :
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears
The eastern sunbeam shines.
Their front now deepening, now extending ;
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know,
They watch'd the motions of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barnore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel Bridge.¹
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile ;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing ;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,

¹ [See Note 28.]

In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel ! thy rock's deep echo rang ;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

XX.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden ! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile ?
What checks the fiery soul of James ?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead ?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand ?
—O, Douglas, for thy leading wand !
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed !
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—" Saint Andrew and our right !"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne !—

The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
And England's host has gain'd the plain ;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden hill.

XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
“ Hark ! hark ! my lord, an English drum !
And see ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon :—hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till !—
Yet more ! yet more !—how far array'd
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by !
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly.”—
“ Stint in thy prate,” quoth Blount, “ thou'dst best
And listen to our lord's behest.”—
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
“ This instant be our band array'd ;
The river must be quickly cross'd,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight King James,—as well I trust,
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins,”

XXII.

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu ;
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And mutter'd as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw :
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Twced Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately :
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride ;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward, driven per force,
The southern bank they gain ;
Behind them, straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train :
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore.
A caution not in vain ;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unhar'n'd, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band ;
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a Cross of Stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command.

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray ;¹
Their marshall'd lines stretch'd east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation pass'd
From the loud cannon mouth ,
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.—
The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion staid :
“ Here, by this Cross,” he gently said,
“ You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare :
O ! think of Marmion in thy prayer !—
Thou wilt not ?—well,—no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten pick'd archers of my train ;
With England, if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—
But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again.”
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire ; but spurr'd amain,
And, dashing through the battle-plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV.

“——The good Lord Marmion, by my life !
Welcome to danger's hour !—
Short greeting serves in time of strife :—
Thus have I ranged my power :

¹ [See Note 29.]

Myself will rule this central host,
 Stout Stanley fronts their right,
 My sons command the vaward post,
 With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight ;¹
 Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
 Shall be in rear-ward of the fight,
 And succour those that need it most.
 Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
 Would gladly to the vanguard go ;
 Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
 With thee their charge would blithely share ;
 There fight thy own retainers too,
 Beneath De Burg, thine steward true."—
 "Thanks, noble Surrey ! " Marmion said,
 Nor farther greeting there he paid ;
 But, parting like a thunderbolt,
 First in the vanguard made a halt,
 Where such a shout there rose
 Of "Marmion ! Marmion !" that the cry,
 Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
 Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
 With Lady Clare upon the hill ;
 On which, (for far the day was spent,)
 The western sunbeams now were bent.
 The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
 Could plain their distant comrades view :
 Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,

¹ Sir Brian Tunstall, called in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the Undeified, was one of the few Englishman of rank slain at Flodden. He figures in the ancient English poem, to which I may safely refer my readers, as an edition, with full explanatory notes, has been published by my friend, Mr. Henry Weber. Tunstall, perhaps, derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner, the latter bearing a white cock, about to crow, as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland Castle.

“Unworthy office here to stay !
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But see ! look up—on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.”
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and fast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland’s war,
As down the hill they broke ;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march ; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon’s point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance’s thrust ;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air ;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long look’d the anxious squires ; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast ;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears ;

And in the smoke the pennon's flew,
 As in the storm the white sea-mew,
 Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
 The broken billows of the war,
 And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
 Floating like foam upon the wave ;
 But nought distinct they see :
 Wide raged the battle on the plain ;
 Spears shook, and falchion's flash'd amain ;
 Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;
 Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
 Wild and disorderly.
 Amid the scene of tumult, high
 They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly :
 And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
 And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
 Still bear them bravely in the fight ;
 Although against them come,
 Of gallant Gordons many a one,
 And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
 And many a rugged Border clan,
 With Huntley, and with Home.

XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
 Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;
 Though there the western mountaineer
 Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
 And flung the feeble targe aside,
 And with both hands the broadsword plied.
 'Twas vain :—but Fortune, on the right,
 With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
 Then fell that spotless banner white,
 The Howard's lion fell ;

Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
 Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky !
A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry :
 Loud were the clanging blows ;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
 The pennon sunk and rose ;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
 It waver'd 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear :
" By Heaven, and all its saints ! I swear
 I will not see it lost !
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
 I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Follow'd by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
 The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
 It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too :—yet staid,
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
 When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
 Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by ;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
 A look and sigh to Clara cast,
 To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
 Left in that dreadful hour alone :
 Perchance her reason stoops, or reels ;
 Perchance a courage, not her own,
 Braces her mind to desperate tone.—
 The scatter'd van of England wheels ;—
 She only said, as loud in air
 The tumult roar'd, " Is Wilton there ?"—
 They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
 Fight but to die,— " Is Wilton there ?"
 With that, straight up the hill there rode
 Two horsemen drench'd with gore,
 And in their arms, a helpless load,
 A wounded knight they bore.
 His hand still strain'd the broken brand ;
 His arms were smear'd with blood and sand :
 Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
 With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
 The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
 Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .
 Young Blount his armour did unlace,
 And, gazing on his ghastly face,
 Said—" By Saint George, he's gone !
 That spear-wound has our master sped,
 And see the deep cut on his head !
 Good-night to Marmion."—
 " Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling cease :
 He opes his eyes," said Eustace ; " peace !"

XXIX.

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,
 Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare :—
 " Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace where ?
 Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !

Redeem my pennon,—charge again !
Cry—‘ Marmion to the rescue !’—Vain !
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne’er be heard again !—
Yet my last thought is England’s—fly,
 To Dacre bear my signet-ring :
 Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie ;
 Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
 His life-blood stains the spotless shield :
 Edmund is down :—my life is reft ;
 The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland’s central host,
Or victory and England’s lost.—
Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets ! fly !
Leave Marmion here alone—to die.”
They parted, and alone he lay ;
 Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmur’d,—“ Is there none,
 Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
 To slake my dying thirst !”

XXX.

O, Woman ! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made ;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou !—

Scarce were the piteous accents said
 When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
 To the nigh streamlet ran :
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;
 The plaintive voice alone she hears,
 Sees but the dying man.
 She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,
 But in abhorrence backward drew ;
 For, oozing from the mountain's side,
 Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
 Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
 Where shall she turn !—behold her mark
 A little fountain cell,
 Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
 In a stone basin fell.
 Above, some half-worn letters say,
Drink. weary. pilgrim. Drink. and. pray.
For. the. kind. soul. of. Sybil. Grey.
Who. built. this. Cross. and. well.
 She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,
 And with 'surprise and joy espied
 A Monk supporting Marmion's head ;
 A pious man, whom duty brought
 To dubious verge of battle fought,
 To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
 And, as she stoop'd his brow to lave—
 “ Is it the hand of Clare,” he said,
 “ Or injured Constance, bathes my head ? ”
 Then, as remembrance rose,—
 “ Speak not to me of shrift or prayer !
 I must redress her woes.

Short space, few words, are mine to spare ;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare ! ”—

“ Alas ! ” she said, “ the while,—
O, think of your immortal weal !
In vain for Constance is your zeal ;
She——died at Holy Isle.”—

Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound ;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
“ Then it was truth,”—he said—“ I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day !
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be !—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder’s lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand !
A sinful heart makes feeble hand.”
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling Monk.

XXXII.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch the gushing wound .
The Monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the Church’s prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady’s voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear ;
For that she ever sung,

*"In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the
dying!"*

So the notes rung ;—

"Avoid thee, Fiend !—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand !—

O, look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine ;

O, think on faith and bliss !—

By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,

But never aught like this."—

The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,

And—STANLEY ! was the cry ;—

A light on Marmion's visage spread,

And fired his glazing eye :

With dying hand, above his head,

He shook the fragment of his blade,

And shouted "Victory !—

Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley, on !"

Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their King,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.

Where's now their victor vaward wing,

Where Huntly, and where Home ?—

O, for a blast of that dread horn,

On Fontarabian echoes borne,

That to King Charles did come,



LADY CLARE AND THE DYING MARMION

She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head.

Marmion, p. 214

From the painting by Alfred Johncock

When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died !
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride !
In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
“O, Lady,” cried the Monk, “away !”
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair,
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring ;

The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight ;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well ;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know ;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land ;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong :
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield !

XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side :—
There, Scotland ! lav thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one :
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be ;
Nor to yon Border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye ;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought ;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain :
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Beseem'd the monarch slain.
But, O ! how changed since yon blithe night !—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
Unto my tale again.

XXXVI.

Short is my tale :—Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile ;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear,

¹ [See Note 30.]

(Now vainly for its sight you look ;
'Twas levell'd, when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral storm'd and took ; ¹
But, thanks to heaven, and good Saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had !)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised ;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods, a peasant swain
Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as “wede away :”
Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,
And dragg'd him to its foot, and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en ;
And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.

¹ This storm of Lichfield Cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the King, took place in the Great Civil War. Lord Brook, who, with Sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the vizor of his helmet. The royalists remarked, that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's Cathedral, and upon St. Chad's day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. The magnificent church in question suffered cruelly upon this and other occasions; the principal spire being ruined by the fire of the besiegers.

They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone ;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sybil Grey,
And broke her font of stone :
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry ;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair ;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave,
That holds the bones of Mamion brave.—
When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong ;
If every devious step, thus trod,
Still led thee farther from the road ;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Mamion's lowly tomb ;
But say, " He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight ;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again ..

'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd,
 Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood :
 Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
 He was the living soul of all ;
 That, after fight, his faith made plain,
 He won his rank and lands again ;
 And charged his old paternal shield
 With bearings won on Flodden Field.
 Nor sing I to that simple maid,
 To whom it must in terms be said,
 That King and kinsmen did agree,
 To bless fair Clara's constancy ;
 Who cannot, unless I relate,
 Paint to her mind the bridal's state ;
 That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
 More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke :
 That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
 And Catherine's hand the stocking threw ;
 And afterwards, for many a day,
 That it was held enough to say,
 In blessing to a wedded pair,
 " Love they like Wilton and like Clare ! "

L'Entoy.

TO THE READER.

WHY then a final note prolong,
 Or lengthen out a closing song,
 Unless to bid the gentles speed,
 Who long have listed to my rede ? ¹
 To statesmen grave, if such may deign
 To read the minstrel's idle strain,

¹ Used generally for *tale*, or *discourse*

Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart—as PITT !
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best ;
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight ?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true ?
And knowledge to the studious sage ;
And pillow to the head of age.
To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task, and merry holiday !
To all, to each, a fair good night !
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light !

M A R M I O N.

APPENDIX.

Note 1, page 17.—*As when the Champion of the Lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse.*

THE Romance of the Morte Arthur contains a sort of abridgement of the most celebrated adventures of the Round Table ; and being written in comparatively modern language, gives the general reader an excellent idea of what romances of chivalry actually were. It has also the merit of being written in pure old English ; and many of the wild adventures which it contains, are told with a simplicity bordering upon the sublime.

Note 2, page 17.—*A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.*

One day, when Arthur was holding a high feast with his Knights of the Round Table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was eaten (a precious relic, which had long remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land), suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas ! it could only be revealed to a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry, and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All Sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with Queen Guenever, or Ganore ; and in his holy quest he encountered only disgraceful disasters.



THE DEATH OF MARMION

He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
Were the last words of Marmion.

Marmion, p. 216

From the painting by Edward Armitage, R.A.

Note 3, page 20.—*Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep, &c.*

The ruinous castle of Norham (anciently called Ubbanford) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. Edward I. resided there when he was created umpire of the dispute concerning the Scottish succession. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and, indeed, scarce any happened, in which it had not a principal share. Norham Castle is situated on a steep bank, which overhangs the river. The repeated sieges which the castle had sustained, rendered frequent repairs necessary. In 1164, it was almost rebuilt by Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, who added a huge keep, or donjon; notwithstanding which, King Henry II., in 1174, took the castle from the bishop, and committed the keeping of it to William de Neville. After this period it seems to have been chiefly garrisoned by the King, and considered as a royal fortress. The Greys of Chillingham Castle were frequently the castellans, or captains of the garrison. Yet, as the castle was situated in the patrimony of St. Cuthbert, the property was in the see of Durham till the Reformation. After that period, it passed through various hands. At the union of the crowns, it was in the possession of Sir Robert Carey (afterwards Earl of Monmouth) for his own life, and that of two of his sons. After King James's accession, Carey sold Norman Castle to George Home, Earl of Dunbar, for £6,000. See his curious Memoirs, published by Mr. Constable, of Edinburgh.

According to Mr. Pinkerton, there is, in the British Museum, Cal. B. 6. 216, a curious memoir of the Dacres on the state of Norham Castle in 1522, not long after the battle of Flodden. The inner ward, or keep, is represented as impregnable:—"The provisions are three great vats of salt eels, forty-four kine, three hogsheds of salted salmon, forty quarters of grain, besides many cows and four hundred sheep, lying under the castle-wall nightly; but a number of the arrows wanted feathers, and a good *Fletcher* [*i.e.* maker of arrows] was required."—*History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 201, note.

The ruins of the castle are at present considerable, as well as picturesque. They consist of a large shattered tower, with many vaults, and fragments of other edifices, enclosed within an outward wall of great circuit. [For a very comprehensive History, see "Norham Castle," by H. E. H. Jerningham. 8vo, Edinburgh, 1883.]

Note 4, page 23.—~~Who~~ *Who checks at me, to death is dight.*

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story :—Sir David de Lindesay, first Earl of Crauford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London, in 1390, by Sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at the court, he there saw Sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed, in a new mantle, bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme,

"I bear a falcon, fairest of flight,
Who so pinches at her, his death is dight¹
In graith. ²

The Scottish knight, being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of Sir Piers :—

"I bear a pie picking at a piece,
Whoso picks at her, I shall pick at his nese,³
In faith."

This affront would only be expiated by a just with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice :—in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the King two hundred pounds, to be forfeited, if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that Sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight at Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred to this equalization of optical powers, Dalzell demanded the forfeit ; which, after much altercation, the King appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the English both in wit and valour. This must appear to the reader a singular specimen of the humour of that time. I suspect the Jockey Club would have given a different decision from Henry IV.

¹ Prepared.

² Armour.

³ Nose.

Note 5, page 26.—*They hail'd Lord Marmion ;
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenay,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town.*

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, Lords of Fontenay, in Normandy, was highly distinguished. Robert de Marmion, Lord of Fontenay, a distinguished follower of the Conqueror, obtained a grant of the castle and town of Tamworth, and also of the manor of Scrivelby, in Lincolnshire. One, or both, of these noble possessions, was held by the honourable service of being the royal champion, as the ancestors of Marmion had formerly been to the Dukes of Normandy. But after the castle and demesne of Tamworth had passed through four successive barons from Robert, the family became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I. without issue male. He was succeeded in his castle of Tamworth by Alexander de Freville, who married Mazera, his grand-daughter. Baldwin de Freville, Alexander's descendant, in the reign of Richard I., by the supposed tenure of his castle at Tamworth, claimed the office of royal champion, and to do the service appertaining ; namely, on the day of coronation, to ride, completely armed, upon a barbed horse, into Westminster Hall, and there to challenge the combat against any who would gainsay the King's title. But this office was adjudged to Sir John Dymoke, to whom the manor of Scrivelby had descended by another of the co-heiresses of Robert de Marmion ; and it remains in that family, whose representative is Hereditary Champion of England at the present day. The family and possessions of Freville have merged in the Earls of Ferrars. I have not, therefore, created a new family, but only revived the titles of an old one in an imaginary personage.

It was one of the Marmion family, who, in the reign of Edward II., performed that chivalrous feat before the very castle of Northham, which Bishop Percy has woven into his beautiful ballad, "The Hermit of Warkworth."—The story is thus told by Leland :—

"The Scottes came yn to the marches of England, and destroyed the castles of Werk and Herbotel, and overran much of Northumberland marches.

"At this tyme, Thomas Gray and his friendes defended Northham from the Scottes.

"It were a wonderful processe to declare, what mischefes cam by hungre and asseges by the space of xi years in Northumber-

land ; for the Scottes became so proude after they had got Berwick, that they nothing esteemed the Englishmen.

"About this tyme there was a greate feste made yn Lincolnshir, to which came many gentlemen and ladies ; and among them one lady brought a heaulme for a man of were, with a very riche creste of gold, to William Marmion, knight, with a letter of commandement of her lady, that he should go into the daungerest place in England, and ther to let the heaulme be seene and known as famous. So he went to Norham ; whither, within 4 days of cumming, cam Philip Moubray, guardian of Berwicke, having yn his bande 40 men armes, the very flour of men of the Scottish marches.

"Thomas Gray, capitaync of Norham, seynge this, brought his garison afore the barriers of the castel, behind whom cam William, richly arrayed, as al glittering in gold, and wearing the heaulme, his lady's present.

"Then said Thomas Gray to Marmion, 'Sir Knight, ye be cum hither to fame your helmet : mount up on yowr horse, and ryde lyke a valiant man to yowr foes even here at hand, and I forsake God if I rescue not thy body deade, or alyve, or I myself wyl dye for it.'

"Whereupon he toke his cursere, and rode among the throng of ennemyes ; the which layed sore stripes on him, and pulled him at the last out of his sadel to the grounde.

"Then Thomas Gray, with al the hole garrison, lette prick yn among the Scottes, and so wondid them and their horses, that they were overthrowan ; and Marmion, sore beten, was horsid agayn, and, with Gray, persewed the Scottes yn chase. There were taken 50 horse of price ; and the women of Norham brought them to the foote men to follow the chase."

Note 6, page 31.—*And given them light to set their hoods.*

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick, were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland. Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington wrote a poem, called "The Blind Baron's Comfort ;" when his barony of Blythe, in Lauderdale, was *harried* by Rowland Foster, the English captain of Wark, with his company, to the number of 300 men. They spoiled the poetical knight of 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares ; the whole furniture of his house of Blythe, worth 100 pounds Scots, (L.8 : 6 : 8,) and everything else that was portable. "This spoil was committed the 16th day of May, 1570, (and the said Sir Richard was three-score and fourteen years of age, and grown blind,) in time of peace ; when nane of that country *libbened* [expected] such a

thing."—"The Blind Baron's Comfort" consists in a string of puns on the word *Blythe*, the name of the lands thus despoiled. Like John Littlewit, he had "a conceit left him in his misery—a miserable conceit."

The last line of the text contains a phrase, by which the Borderers jocularly intimated the burning a house. When the Maxwells, in 1685, burned the castle of Lochwood, they said they did so to give the Lady Johnstone "light to set her hood." Nor was the phrase inapplicable; for, in a letter, to which I have mislaid the reference, the Earl of Northumberland writes to the King and Council, that he dressed himself at midnight, at Warkworth, by the blaze of the neighbouring villages burned by the Scottish marauders.

Note 7, page 34.—*Saint Rosalie retired to God.*

"Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and, when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father's house, and never was more heard of, till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built; and they affirm she was carried up there by the hands of angels; for that place was not formerly so accessible (as now it is) in the days of the Saint; and even now it is a very bad, and steepy, and breakneck way. In this frightful place, this holy woman lived a great many years, feeding only on what she found growing on that barren mountain, and creeping into a narrow and dreadful cleft in a rock, which was always dropping wet, and was her place of retirement, as well as prayer; having worn out even the rock with her knees, in a certain place, which is now open'd on purpose to show it to those who come here. This chapel is very richly adorn'd; and on the spot where the Saint's dead body was discover'd, which is just beneath the hole in the rock, which is open'd on purpose, as I said, there is a very fine statue of marble, representing her in a lying posture, railed in all about with fine iron and brass work; and the altar, on which they say mass, is built just over it."—*Voyage to Sicily and Malta*, by Mr. John Dryden (son to the poet) p. 107.

Note 8, page 38.—*Sung to the billows' sound.*

St. Regulus, (*Scotticé*, St. Rule) a monk of Patræ, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A.D. 370, to have sailed westward, until he landed at St Andrews, in Scotland, where he founded a

chapel and tower. The latter is still standing ; and, though we may doubt the precise date of its foundation, is certainly one of the most ancient edifices in Scotland. A cave, nearly fronting the ruinous castle of the Archbishops of St. Andrews, bears the name of this religious person. It is difficult of access ; and the rock in which it is hewed is washed by the German Ocean. It is nearly round, about ten feet in diameter, and the same in height. On one side is a sort of stone altar ; on the other an aperture into an inner den, where the miserable ascetic, who inhabited this dwelling, probably slept. At full tide, egress and regress are hardly practicable. As *Regulus* first colonized the metropolitan see of Scotland, and converted the inhabitants in the vicinity, he has some reason to complain, that the ancient name of Killrule (*Cella Reguli*) should have been superseded, even in favour of the tutelar saint of Scotland. The reason of the change was, that St. Rule is said to have brought to Scotland the relics of St. Andrew.

St. Fillan was a Scottish saint of some reputation. Although Popery is, with us, matter of abomination, yet the common people still retain some of the superstitions connected with it. There are in Perthshire several wells and springs dedicated to St. Fillan, which are still places of pilgrimage and offerings, even among the Protestants. They are held powerful in cases of madness ; and, in some of very late occurrence, lunatics have been left all night bound to the holy stone, in confidence that the saint would cure and unloose them before morning.

Note 9, page 40.—*The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair.*

Ettrick forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase. Since it was disparked, the wood has been by degrees, almost totally destroyed, although, wherever protected from the sheep, copses soon arise without any planting. When the king hunted there, he often summoned the array of the country to meet and assist his sport. Thus in 1528, James V. "made proclamation to all lords, barons, gentlemen, landward-men, and freeholders, that they should compear at Edinburgh, with a month's victuals, to pass with the King where he pleased, to danton the thieves of Tiviotdale, Annandale, Liddisdale, and other parts of that country ; and also warned all gentlemen that had good dogs to bring them, that he might hunt in the said country as he pleased : The whilk the Earl of Argyle, the Earl of Huntley, the Earl of Athole, and so all the rest of the gentlemen of the Highland,

did, and brought their hounds with them in like manner, to hunt with the King, as he pleased.

"The second day of June the King passed out of Edinburgh to the hunting, with many of the nobles and gentlemen of Scotland with him, to the number of twelve thousand men; and then past to Meggitland, and hounded and hawked all the country and bounds; that is to say, Crammat, Pappert-law, St Mary-laws, Carlavirick, Chapel, Ewindoores, and Longhope. I heard say, he slew, in these bounds, eighteen score of harts."¹

These huntings had, of course, a miliary character, and attendance upon them was a part of the duty of a vassal. The act for abolishing ward or military tenures in Scotland, enumerates the services of hunting, hosting, watching, and warding, as those which were in future to be illegal.

Note 10, page 58.—*Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three Barons bold
Must menial service do.*

The popular account of this curious service, which was probably considerably exaggerated, is thus given in "A True Account," printed and circulated at Whitby: "In the fifth year of the reign of Henry II., after the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy, the Lord of Uglebarnby, then called William de Bruce; the Lord of Smeaton, called Ralph de Percy; with a gentleman and freeholder called Allatson, did, on the 16th of October, 1159, appoint to meet and hunt the wild-boar, in a certain wood, or desert place, belonging to the Abböt of Whitby; the place's name was Eskdale-side; and the abbot's name was Sedman. Then, these young gentlemen being met, with their hounds, and boar-staves, in the place before mentioned, and there having found a great wild-boar, the hounds ran him well near about the chapel and hermitage of Eskdale-side, where was a monk of Whitby, who was an hermit. The boar, being very sorely pursued, and dead-run, took in at the chapel-door, there laid him down, and presently died. The hermit shut the hounds out of the chapel, and kept himself within at his meditations and prayers, the hounds standing at bay without. The gentlemen, in the thick of the wood, being just behind their game, followed the cry of their hounds, and so came to the hermitage, calling on the hermit, who opened the door, and came forth, and within they found the boar lying dead; for which, the gentlemen, in a very great fury, because the hounds were put from their game, did most violently and cruelly run at the hermit with their boar-staves, whereby he soon after died.

¹ PITSCOTTIE'S *History of Scotland*, folio edition, p. 143.

Thereupon the gentlemen, perceiving and knowing that they were in peril of death, took sanctuary at Scarborough: But at that time the abbot being in very great favour with the King, removed them out of the sanctuary; whereby they came in danger of the law, and not to be privileged, but likely to have the severity of the law, which was death for death. But the hermit, being a holy and devout man, and at the point of death, sent for the abbot, and desired him to send for the gentlemen who had wounded him. The abbot so doing, the gentlemen came; and the hermit, being very sick and weak, said unto them, 'I am sure to die of those wounds you have given me.'—The abbot answered, 'They shall as surely die for the same.'—But the hermit answered, 'Not so, for I will freely forgive them my death, if they will be content to be enjoined the penance I shall lay on them for the safeguard of their souls.' The gentlemen being present, bade him save their lives.—Then said the hermit, 'You and yours shall hold your lands of the Abbot of Whitby, and his successors, in this manner: That, upon Ascension-day, you, or some of you, shall come to the wood of the Stray-heads, which is in Eskdale-side, the same day at sun-rising, and there shall the abbot's officer blow his horn, to the intent that you may know where to find him; and he shall deliver unto you, William de Bruce, ten stakes, eleven strout stowers, and eleven yethers, to be cut by you, or some of you, with a knife of one penny price: and you, Ralph de Percy, shall take twenty-one of each sort, to be cut in the same manner; and you, Allatson, shall take nine of each sort, to be cut as aforesaid, and to be taken on your backs and carried to the town of Whitby, and to be there before nine of the clock the same day before mentioned. At the same hour of nine of the clock, if it be full sea, your labour and service shall cease; and if low water, each of you shall set your stakes to the brim, each stake one yard from the other, and so yether them on each side with your yethers; and so stake on each side with your strout stowers, that they may stand three tides, without removing by the force thereof. Each of you shall do, make, and execute the said service, at that very hour, every year, except it be full sea at that hour; but when it shall so fall out, this service shall cease. You shall faithfully do this, in remembrance that you did most cruelly slay me; and that you may the better call to God for mercy, repent unfeignedly of your sins, and do good works. The officer of Eskdale-side shall blow, *Out on you! Out on you! Out on you!* for this heinous crime. If you, or your successors, shall refuse this service, so long as it shall not be full sea at the aforesaid hour, you or yours, shall forfeit your lands to the Abbot of Whitby, or his successors. This I entreat, and earnestly beg,

that you may have lives and goods preserved for this service : and I request of you to promise, by your parts in Heaven, that it shall be done by you and your successors, as is aforesaid requested ; and I will confirm it by the faith of an honest man.' Then the hermit said, 'My soul longeth for the Lord : and I do as freely forgive these men my death, as Christ forgave the thieves on the cross.' And, in the presence of the abbot and the rest, he said moreover these words : '*In manus tuos, Domine, commendo spiritum meum, a vinculis enim mortis redemisti me, Domine veritatis. Amen.*' So he yielded up the ghost the eighth day of December, anno Domini 1159, whose soul God have mercy upon. Amen.

"This service," it is added, "still continues to be performed with the prescribed ceremonies, though not by the proprietors in person. Part of the lands charged therewith are now held by a gentleman of the name of Herbert."

Note II, page 59.—*How oft their patron changed, they told.*

St. Cuthbert was, in the choice of his sepulchre, one of the most mutable and unreasonable saints in the Calendar. He died A.D. 688, in a hermitage upon the Farne Islands, having resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, about two years before.¹ His body was brought to Lindisfarne, where it remained until a descent of the Danes, about 793, when the monastery was nearly destroyed. The monks fled to Scotland, with what they deemed their chief treasure, the relics of St. Cuthbert. The Saint was, however, a most capricious fellow-traveller ; which was the more intolerable, as, like Sinbad's Old Man of the Sea, he journeyed upon the shoulders of his companions. They paraded him through Scotland for several years and came as far west as Whithern, in Galloway, whence they attempted to sail for Ireland, but were driven back by tempests. He at length made a halt at Norham ; from thence he went to Melrose, where he remained stationary for a short time, and then caused himself to be launched upon the Tweed in a stone coffin, which landed him at Tilmouth, in Northumberland. This boat is finely shaped, ten feet long, three feet and a half in diameter, and only four inches thick ; so that, with very little assistance, it might certainly have swam ; It still lies, or at least did so a few years ago, in two pieces, beside the ruined chapel of Tilmouth. From Tilmouth, Cuthbert wandered into Yorkshire ;

¹ [He resumed the bishopric of Lindisfarne, which, owing to bad health, he again relinquished within less than three months before his death.—RAINE'S *St. Cuthbert*.]

and at length made a long stay at Chester-le-street, to which the bishop's see was transferred. At length, the Danes, continuing to infest the country, the monks removed to Rippon for a season ; and it was in return from thence to Chester-le-street, that, passing through a forest called Dunholme, the Saint and his carriage became immovable at a place named Wardlaw, or Wardilaw. Here the Saint chose his place of residence ; and all who have seen Durham must admit, that, if difficult in his choice, he evinced taste in at length fixing it. It is said, that the Northumbrian Catholics still keep secret the precise spot of the Saint's sepulture, which is only intrusted to three persons at a time. When one dies, the survivors associate to them, in his room, a person judged fit to be the depositary of so valuable a secret.

[The resting-place of the remains of this Saint is not now matter of uncertainty. So recently as 17th May, 1827, 1139 years after his death, their discovery and disinterment were effected. Under a blue stone, in the middle of the shrine of St. Cuthbert, at the eastern extremity of the choir of Durham Cathedral, there was then found a walled grave, containing the coffins of the Saint. The first, or outer one, was ascertained to be that of 1541, the second of 1041 ; the third, or inner one, answering in every particular to the description of that of 698, was found to contain, not indeed, as had been averred then, and even until 1539, the incorruptible body, but the entire skeleton of the Saint ; the bottom of the grave being perfectly dry, free from offensive smell, and without the slightest symptom that a human body had ever undergone decomposition within its walls. The skeleton was found swathed in five silk robes of emblematical embroidery, the ornamental parts laid with gold leaf, and these again covered with a robe of linen. Beside the skeleton were also deposited several gold and silver *insignia*, and other relics of the Saint.

(The Roman Catholics now allow that the coffin was that of St. Cuthbert.)

The bones of the Saint were again restored to the grave in a new coffin, amid the fragments of the former ones. Those portions of the inner coffin which could be preserved, including one of its rings, with the silver altar, golden cross, stole, comb, two maniples, bracelets, girdle, gold wire of the skeleton, and fragments of the five silk robes, and some of the rings of the outer coffin made in 1541, were deposited in the library of the Dean and Chapter, where they are now preserved.

For ample details of the life of St. Cuthbert—his coffin-journeys, an account of the opening of his tomb, and a description of the silk robes and other relics found in it, the reader interested

in such matters is referred to a work entitled "Saint Cuthbert, by James Raine, M.A., (4to, Durham, 1828,) where he will find much of antiquarian history, ceremonies, and superstitions, to gratify his curiosity.—ED.]

Note 12, page 61.—*Old Colwulf built it, for his fault.*

Ceolwulf, or Colwulf, King of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning; for the venerable Bede dedicates to him his "Ecclesiastical History." He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity. Saint as Colwulf was, however, I fear the foundation of the penance-vault does not correspond with his character; for it is recorded among his *memorabilia*, that, finding the air of the island raw and cold, he indulged the monks, whose rule had hitherto confined them to milk or water, with the comfortable privilege of using wine or ale. If any rigid antiquary insists on this objection, he is welcome to suppose the penance vault was intended, by the founder, for the more genial purposes of a cellar.

These penitential vaults were the *Geissel-geuolbe* of German convents. In the earlier and more rigid times of monastic discipline, they were sometimes used as a cemetery for the lay benefactors of the convent, whose unsanctified corpses were then seldom permitted to pollute the choir. They also served as places of meeting for the chapter, when measures of uncommon severity were to be adopted. But their most frequent use, as implied by the name, was as places for performing penances, or undergoing punishment.

Note 13, page 63.—*Tynemouth's haughty Prioress.*

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are situated on a high rocky point; and, doubtless, many a vow was made to the shrine by the distressed mariners, who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery; for Virca, abbess of Tynemouth, presented St. Cuthbert (yet alive) with a rare winding-sheet, in emulation of a holy lady called Tuda, who had sent him a coffin: But, as in the case of Whitby, and of Holy Island, the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth, in the reign of Henry VIII., is an anachronism. The nunnery at Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St. Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment; for, notwithstanding his accepting

the mortuary gifts above mentioned, and his carrying on a visiting acquaintance with the abbess of Coldingham, he certainly hated the whole female sex; and, in revenge of a slippery trick played to him by an Irish princess, he, after death, inflicted severe penances on such as presumed to approach within a certain distance of his shrine.

Note 14, page 81.—*The village inn seem'd large, though rude.*

The accommodations of a Scottish hostelrie, or inn, in the 16th century, may be collected from Dunbar's admirable tale of "The Friars of Berwick." Simon Lawder, "the gay ostler," seems to have lived very comfortably; and his wife decorated her person with a scarlet kirtle, and a belt of silk and silver, and rings upon her fingers; and feasted her paramour with rabbits, capons, partridges, and Bordeaux wine. At least, if the Scottish inns were not good, it was not from want of encouragement from the legislature; who, so early as the reign of James I., not only enacted, that in all boroughs and fairs there be hostellaries, having stables and chambers, and provision for man and horse, but by another statute, ordained that no man, travelling on horse or foot, should presume to lodge anywhere except in these hostellaries; and that no person, save innkeepers, should receive such travellers, under the penalty of forty shillings, for exercising such hospitality.¹ But, in spite of these provident enactments, the Scottish hostels are but indifferent, and strangers continue to find reception in the houses of individuals.

Note 15, page 97.—*Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield
Upon the brown hill's breast.*

The following extract from the Author's Essay upon the Fairy Superstitions, will show whence many of the particulars of the combat between Alexander III., and the Goblin Knight are derived:—

Gervase of Tilbury (*Otia Imperial ap. Script. rer. Brunsvic*, vol. i. p. 797) relates the following popular story concerning a fairy knight: "Osbert, a bold and powerful baron, visited a noble family in the vicinity of Wandlebury, in the bishopric of Ely. Among other stories related in the social circle of his friends, who, according to custom, amused each other by repeating ancient tales and traditions, he was informed, that if any knight unattended, entered an adjacent plain by moonlight, and challenged an adversary to appear, he would be immediately en-

¹ James I. Parliament I. cap. 24; Parliament III., cap. 56.

countered by a spirit in the form of a knight. Osbert resolved to make the experiment, and set out, attended by a single squire, whom he ordered to remain without the limits of the plain, which was surrounded by an ancient intrenchment. On repeating the challenge, he was instantly assailed by an adversary, whom he quickly unhorsed, and seized the reins of his steed. During this operation, his ghostly opponent sprung up, and darting his spear, like a javelin, at Osbert, wounded him in the thigh. Osbert returned in triumph with the horse, which he committed to the care of his servants. The horse was of a sable colour, as well as his whole accoutrements, and apparently of great beauty and vigour. He remained with his keeper till cock-crowing, when, with eyes flashing fire, he reared, spurned the ground, and vanished. On disarming himself, Osbert perceived that he was wounded, and that one of his steel boots was full of blood." Gervase adds, that "as long as he lived, the scar of his wound opened afresh on the anniversary of the eve on which he encountered the spirit." Less fortunate was the gallant Bohemian knight, who, travelling by night with a single companion, "came in sight of a fairy host, arrayed under displayed banners. Despising the remonstrances of his friend, the knight pricked forward to break a lance with a champion, who advanced from the ranks apparently in defiance. His companion beheld the Bohemian overthrown, horse and man, by his aerial adversary; and returning to the spot next morning, he found the mangled corpses of the knight and steed."—*Hierarchy of Blessed Angels*, p. 554.

Besides these instances of Elfin chivalry above quoted, many others might be alleged in support of employing fairy machinery in this manner. The forest of Glenmore, in the North Highlands, is believed to be haunted by a spirit called *Lham-dearg*, in the array of an ancient warrior, having a bloody hand, from which he takes his name. He insists upon those with whom he meets doing battle with him; and the clergyman, who makes up an account of the district, extant in the Macfarlane MS., in the Advocates' Library, gravely assures us, that, in his time, *Lham-dearg* fought with three brothers whom he met in his walk, none of whom long survived the ghostly conflict. Barclay, in his "*Euphormion*," gives a singular account of an officer who had ventured, with his servant, rather to intrude upon a haunted house, in a town in Flanders, than to put up with worse quarters elsewhere. After taking the usual precautions of providing fires, lights, and arms, they watched till midnight, when behold! the severed arm of a man dropped from the ceiling; this was followed by the legs, the other arm, the trunk, and the head of the body, all separately. The mem

bers rolled together, united themselves in the presence of the astonished soldiers, and formed a gigantic warrior, who defied them both to combat. Their blows, although they penetrated the body, and amputated the limbs, of their strange antagonist, had, as the reader may easily believe, little effect on an enemy who possessed such powers of self-union; nor did his efforts make more effectual impression upon them. How the combat terminated I do not exactly remember, and have not the book by me; but I think the spirit made to the intruders on his mansion the usual proposal, that they should renounce their redemption; which being declined, he was obliged to retreat.

Note 16, page 115.—*Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms!*

The late elaborate edition of Sir David Lindesay's Works, by Mr. George Chalmers, has probably introduced him to many of my readers. It is perhaps to be regretted, that the learned editor had not bestowed more pains in elucidating his author, even although he should have admitted, or at least reserved, his disquisitions on the origin of the language used by the poet.¹ But, with all its faults, his work is an acceptable present to Scottish antiquaries. Sir David Lindesay was well known for his early efforts in favour of the reformed doctrines; and, indeed, his play, coarse as it now seems, must have had a powerful effect upon the people of his age. I am uncertain if I abuse poetical license, by introducing Sir David Lindesay in the character of Lion-Herald, sixteen years before he attained that office. At anyrate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism; for the author of "Flodden Field" despatches *Dallamont*, which can mean nobody but Sir David de la Mont, to France, on the message of defiance from James IV. to Henry VIII. It was often an office imposed on the Lion King-at-arms, to receive foreign ambassadors; and Lindesay himself did this honour to Sir Ralph Sadler, in 1539-40. Indeed, the oath of the Lion, in its first article, bears reference to his frequent employment upon royal messages and embassies.

The office of heralds, in feudal times, being held of the utmost importance, the inauguration of the Kings-at-arms, who presided over their colleges, was proportionally solemn. In fact, it was the mimicry of a royal coronation, except that the unction was made with wine instead of oil. In Scotland, a namesake and kinsman of Sir David Lindesay, inaugurated in 1592, "was crowned by King James with the ancient crown of Scotland, which was used before the Scottish Kings assumed a close

¹ [A better edition has since been edited by Dr. David Laing.]

crown ;" and, on occasion of the same solemnity, dined at the King's table, wearing the crown. It is probable that the coronation of his predecessor was not less solemn. So sacred was the herald's office, that, in 1515, Lord Drummond was by Parliament declared guilty of treason, and his lands forfeited, because he had struck, with his fist, the Lion King-at-arms, when he reproved him for his follies. Nor was he restored, but at the Lion's earnest solicitation.

Note 17, page 116.—*Crichtoun Castle.*

page 118.—*The darkness of thy Massy More.*

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about ten miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times, and with a very differing regard to splendour and accommodation. The oldest part of the building is a narrow keep, or tower, such as formed the mansion of a lesser Scottish baron ; but so many additions have been made to it, that there is now a large court-yard, surrounded by buildings of different ages. The eastern front of the court is raised above a portico, and decorated with entablatures, bearing anchors. All the stones of this front are cut into diamond facets, the angular projections of which have an uncommonly rich appearance. The inside of this part of the building appears to have contained a gallery of great length, and uncommon elegance. Access was given to it by a magnificent stair-case, now quite destroyed. The soffits are ornamented with twining cordage and rosettes : and the whole seems to have been far more splendid than was usual in Scottish castles. The castle belonged originally to the Chancellor, Sir William Crichton, and probably owed to him its first enlargement, as well as its being taken by the Earl of Douglas, who imputed to Crichton's counsels the death of his predecessor, Earl William, beheaded in Edinburgh Castle, with his brother, in 1440. It is said to have been totally demolished on that occasion ; but the present state of the ruin shows the contrary. In 1483, it was garrisoned by Lord Crichton, then its proprietor, against King James III., whose displeasure he had incurred by seducing his sister Margaret, in revenge, it is said, for the Monarch having dishonoured his bed. From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, Earls Bothwell ; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last Earl Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the Earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton, and are now that of Sir John Callander, Baronet. It were to be wished the proprietor would take a little pains to preserve these splendid remains of antiquity, which are at present used as a fold for sheep,

and wintering cattle; although, perhaps, there are very few ruins in Scotland which display so well the style and beauty of ancient castle-architecture. The castle of Crichton has a dungeon vault, called the *Massy More*. The epithet, which is not uncommonly applied to the prisons of other old castles in Scotland, is of Saracenic origin. The same word applies to the dungeons of the ancient Moorish castles in Spain, and serves to show from what nation the Gothic style of castle building was originally derived.

Note 18, page 119.—*For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war.*

page 183.—*My song the messenger from Heaven,
That warned, in Lithgow, Scotland's King.*

This story is told by Pitscottie with characteristic simplicity:—"The King, seeing that France could get no support of him for that time, made a proclamation, full hastily, through all the realm of Scotland, both east and west, south and north, as well in the isles as in the firm land, to all manner of men between sixty and sixteen years, that they should be ready, within twenty days, to pass with him, with forty days victual, and to meet at the Burrowmuir of Edinburgh, and there to pass forward where he pleased. His proclamations were hastily obeyed, contrary the Council of Scotland's will; but every man loved his prince so well, that they would on no ways disobey him; but every man caused make his proclamation so hastily, conform to the charge of the King's proclamation.

"The King came to Lithgow, where he happened to be for the time at the Council, very sad and dolorous, making his devotion to God, to send him good chance and fortune in his voyage. In this meantime, there came a man, clad in a blue gown, in at the kirk door, and belted about him in a roll of linen-cloth; a pair of brotikings¹ on his feet, to the great of his legs; with all other hose and clothes conform thereto: but he had nothing on his head, but syde² red yellow hair behind, and on his haffets,³ which wan down to his shoulders; but his forehead was bald and bare. He seemed to be a man of two-and-fifty years, with a great pike-staff in his hand, and came first forward among the lords, crying and speiring⁴ for the King, saying, he desired to speak with him. While, at the last, he came where the King was sitting in the desk at his prayers; but when he saw the King, he made him little reverence or salutation, but leaned down groffling on the desk before him, and said to him in this manner, as after follows: 'Sir King, my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass, at this

¹ Buskins.

² Long

³ Cheeks

⁴ Asking.

time, where thou are purposed ; for if thou does, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee mell¹ with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs ; for, if thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame.'

"By this man had spoken. thir words unto the King's grace, the evening-song was near done, and the King paused on thir words, studying to give him an answer ; but, in the meantime, before the King's eyes, and in the presence of all the lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no ways be seen or comprehended, but vanished away as he had been a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be seen. I heard say, Sir David Lindesay, Lyon-herald, and John Inglis the marshal, who were, at that time, young men, and special servants to the King's grace, were standing presently beside the King, who thought to have laid hands on this man, that they might have speired further tidings at him : But all for nought ; they could not touch him ; for he vanished away betwixt them, and was no more seen."

Buchanan, in more elegant, though not more impressive language, tells the same story, and quotes the personal information of our Sir David Lindesay : '*In iis (i.e., qui propius astiterant) fuit David Lindesius, Montanus, homo spectatæ fidei et probitatis, nec a literarum studiis alienus, et cujus totius vitæ tenor longissime a mentiendo aberrat ; a quo nisi ego hæc uti tradidi, pro certis accepissem, ut vulgatam vanis rumoribus fabulum, omissurus eram.*'—Lib. xiii. The King's throne, in St. Catherine's aisle, which he had constructed for himself, with twelve stalls for the Knights Companions of the Order of the Thistle, is still shown as the place where the apparition was seen. I know not by what means St. Andrew got the credit of having been the celebrated monitor of James IV. ; for the expression in Lindesay's narrative : "My mother has sent me," could only be used by St. John, the adopted son of the Virgin Mary. The whole story is so well attested, that we have only the choice between a miracle or an imposture. Mr. Pinkerton plausibly argues, from the caution against incontinence, that the Queen was privy to the scheme of those who had recourse to this expedient, to deter King James from his impolitic war.

Note 19, page 138.—*To Henry meek she gave repose.*

Henry VI., with his Queen, his heir, and the chiefs of his family, fled to Scotland after the fatal battle of Towton. In this note a doubt was formerly expressed, whether Henry VI. came to Edinburgh, though his Queen certainly did ; Mr. Pinkerton

¹ Meddle.

inclining to believe that he remained at Kircudbright. But my noble friend, Lord Napier, has pointed out to me a grant by Henry of an annuity of forty marks to his Lordship's ancestor, John Napier, subscribed by the King himself, at *Edinburgh*, the 28th day of August, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, which corresponds to the year of God, 1461. This grant, Douglas, with his usual neglect of accuracy, dates in 1368. But this error being corrected from the copy in Macfarlane's MSS., p. 119, 20, removes all scepticism on the subject of Henry VI. being really at *Edinburgh*. John Napier was son and heir of Alexander Napier, and about this time was Provost of *Edinburgh*. The hospitable reception of the distressed monarch and his family, called forth on Scotland the encomium of Molinet, a contemporary poet.

Note 20, page 150.—*Sir Hugh the Herons wife held sway.*

It has been already noticed [see note to stanza xiii. of canto i.,] that King James's acquaintance with Lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the King's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden. The author of "The Genealogy of the Heron Family" endeavours, with laudable anxiety, to clear the Lady Ford from this scandal: that she came and went, however, between the armies of James and Surrey, is certain. See PINKERTON'S *History*, and the authorities he refers to, vol. ii. p. 99. Heron of Ford had been, in 1511, in some sort accessory to the slaughter of Sir Robert Kerr of Cessford, Warden of the Middle Marches. It was committed by his brother the bastard, Lilburn, and Starked, three Borderers. Lilburn, and Heron of Ford, were delivered up by Henry to James, and were imprisoned in the fortress of Fastcastle, where the former died. Part of the pretence of Lady Ford's negotiations with James was the liberty of her husband.

Note 21, page 155.—*Archibald Bell-the-Cat.*

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-Cat*, upon the following remarkable occasion:—James the Third, of whom Pitscottie complains, that he delighted more in music, and "policies of building," than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised, as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathize in the King's respect for the fine arts, were ex-

tremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochrane, a mason, who had been created Earl of Mar; and, seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the King had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the King's person. When all had agreed on the propriety of this measure, Lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the Micé, who had formed a resolution, that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat's neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance; but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. "I understand the moral," said Angus, "and, that what we propose may not lack execution, I will *bell the cat*." The rest of the strange scene is thus told by Pitscottie:—

"By this was advised and spoken by thir lordis foresaid, Cochran, the Earl of Mar, came from the King to the council, (which council was holden in the kirk of Lauder for the time,) who was well accompanied with a band of men of war, to the number of three hundred light axes, all clad in white livery, and black bends thereon, that they might be known for Cochran the Earl of Mar's men. Himself was clad in a riding-pie of black velvet with a great chain of gold about his neck, to the value of five hundred crowns, and four blowing horns, with both the ends of gold and silk, set with a precious stone, called a berryl, hanging in the midst. This Cochran had his heumont born before him, overgilt with gold, and so were all the rest of his horns, and all his pallions were of fine canvas of silk, and the cords thereof fine twined silk, and the chains upon his pallions were double overgilt with gold.

"This Cochran was so proud in his conceit, that he counted no lords to be marrows to him, therefore he rushed rudely at the kirk-door. The council enquired who it was that perturbed them at that time. Sir Robert Douglas, Laird of Lochleven, was keeper of the kirk-door at that time, who enquired who that was that knocked so rudely? and Cochran answered, 'This is I, the Earl of Mar.' The which news pleased well the lords, because they were ready boun to cause take him, as is before rehearsed. Then the Earl of Angus past hastily to the door, and with him Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, there to receive in the Earl of Mar, and so many of his complices who were there, as they thought good. And the Earl of Angus met with the Earl of Mar, as he came in at the door, and pulled the golden chain from his craig, and said to him, a tow¹ would set

¹ Rope.

him better. Sir Robert Douglas syne pulled the blowing horn from him in like manner, and said, 'He had been the hunter of mischief over long.' This Cochran asked, 'My lords, is it mows,¹ or earnest?' They answered, and said, 'It is good earnest, and so thou shalt find; for thou and thy complices have abused our prince this long time; of whom thou shalt have no more credence, but shalt have thy reward according to thy good service, as thou hast deserved in times bypast; right so the rest of thy followers.'

"Notwithstanding, the lords held them quiet till they caused certain armed men to pass into the King's pallion, and two or three wise men to pass with them, and give the King fair pleasant words, till they laid hands on all the King's servants, and took them and hanged them before his eyes over the bridge of Lawder. Incontinent they brought forth Cochran, and his hands bound with a tow, who desired them to take one of his own pallion tows and bind his hands, for he thought shame to have his hands bound with such tow of hemp, like a thief. The lords answered, he was a traitor, he deserved no better; and, for despiht, they took a hair tether² and hanged him over the bridge of Lawder, above the rest of his complices."—PITSCOTTIE, p. 78, folio edit.

Note 22, page 156.—*Then rest you on Tantallon Hold.*

The ruins of Tantallon Castle occupy a high rock projecting into the German Ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick. The building is not seen till a close approach, as there is rising ground betwixt it and the land. The circuit is of large extent fenced upon three sides by the precipice which overhangs the sea, and on the fourth by a double ditch and very strong out-works. Tantallon was a principal castle of the Douglas family, and when the Earl of Angus was banished, in 1527, it continued to hold out against James V. The King went in person against it, and for its reduction, borrowed from the castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the Duke of Albany, two great cannons, whose names, as Pitscottie informs us with laudable minuteness, were "Thrawn-mouth'd Meg and her Marrow;" also, "two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons;" for the safe guiding and re-delivery of which, three lords were laid in pawn at Dunbar. Yet, notwithstanding all this apparatus, James was forced to raise the siege, and only afterwards obtained possession of Tantallon by treaty with the governor, Simon Panango. When the Earl of Angus returned from banishment, upon the death of James, he again obtained possession of Tantallon, and it actually afforded refuge

¹ Jest.

² Halter.

to an English ambassador, under circumstances similar to those described in the text. This was no other than the celebrated Sir Ralph Sadler, who resided there for some time under Angus's protection, after the failure of his negotiation for matching the infant Mary with Edward VI. He says, that though this place was poorly furnished, it was of such strength as might warrant him against the malice of his enemies, and that he now thought himself out of danger.¹

There is a military tradition, that the old Scottish March was meant to express the words,

Ding down Tantallon,
Mak a brig to the Bass.

Tantallon was at length "dung down" and ruined by the Covenanters; its lord, the Marquis of Douglas, being a favourer of the royal cause. The castle and barony were sold in the beginning of the eighteen century to President Dalrymple of North Berwick, by the then Marquis of Douglas.

Note 23, page 156.—*He wears their motto on his blade.*

A very ancient sword, in possession of Lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a heart, which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the Good Lord Douglas to carry his heart to the Holy Land. The following lines (the first couplet of which is quoted by Godscroft as a popular saying in his time) are inscribed around the emblem :

"So mony guid as of ye Dovglas beinge,
Of ane surname was ne'er in Scotland seine.

I will ye charge, efter yat I depart,
To holy grawe, and thair bury my hart;
Let it remane ever BOTHE TYME AND HOWR,
To ye last day I sie my Saviour.

I do protest in tyme of al my ringe,
Ye lyk subject had never ony keing."

This curious and valuable relic was nearly lost during the Civil War of 1745-6, being carried away from Douglas-Castle by some of those in arms for Prince Charles. But great interest having been made by the Duke of Douglas among the chief partisans of the Stuart, it was at length restored. It resembles a Highland claymore, of the usual size, is of an excellent temper, and admirably poised.

The very curious State Papers of this able negotiator were, in 1810, published by Mr. Clifford, with some notes by the Author of *Marmion*.

Note 24, page 165.— *A minstrel's malison is said.*

The Cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. At each angle there was a pillar, and between them an arch, of the Grecian shape. Above these was a projecting battlement, with a turret at each corner, and medallions, of rude but curious workmanship, between them. Above this rose the proper Cross, a column of one stone, upwards of twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. This pillar is preserved in the grounds of the property of Drum, near Edinburgh. The Magistrates of Edinburgh, in 1756, with consent of the Lords of Session, (*proh pudor!*) destroyed this curious monument, under a wanton pretext that it encumbered the street; while, on the one hand, they left an ugly mass called the Luckenbooths, and, on the other, an awkward, long, and low guard-house, which were fifty times more encumbrance than the venerable and inoffensive Cross.

From the tower of the Cross, so long as it remained, the heralds published the acts of Parliament; and its site, marked by radii, diverging from a stone centre, in the High Street, is still the place where proclamations are made.

[In 1885, the Cross of Edinburgh was restored, the tower being constructed on plans as near the original as possible, and is surmounted by the original column referred to above. The work was carried out at the expense of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P. for Midlothian, and by him presented to the city.]

Note 25, page 165.— *This awful summons came.*

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was, probably, like the apparition of Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV. The following account from Pitscottie is characteristically minute, and furnishes, besides, some curious particulars of the equipment of the army of James IV. I need only add to it, that Plotcock, or Plutock, is no other than Pluto. The Christians of the middle ages by no means misbelieved in the existence of the heathen deities; they only considered them as devils;¹ and Plotcock, so far from

¹ Chaucer calls Pluto the "King of Faerie;" and Dunbar names him, "Pluto, that elrich incubus." If he was not actually the devil, he must be considered as the "prince of the power of the air." The most remarkable instance of these surviving classical superstitions, is that of the Germans, concerning the Hill of Venus, into which she attempts to entice all gallant knights, and detains them there in a sort of Fools' Paradise.

implying anything fabulous, was a synonyme of the grand enemy of mankind. "Yet all thir warnings, and uncouth tidings, nor no good counsel, might stop the King, at this present, from his vain purpose, and wicked enterprise, but hasted him fast to Edinburgh, and there to make his provision and furnishing, in having forth of his army against the day appointed, that they should meet in the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh: That is to say, seven cannons that he had forth of the Castle of Edinburgh, which were called the Seven Sisters, casten by Robert Borthwick, the master-gunner, with other small artillery, bullet, powder, and all manner of order, as the master-gunner could devise.

"In this meantime, when they were taking forth their artillery, and the King being in the Abbey for the time, there was a cry heard at the Market-cross of Edinburgh, at the hour of midnight, proclaiming as it had been a summons, which was named and called by the proclaimer thereof, The Summons of Plotcock; which desired all men to compear, both Earl, and Lord, and Baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town, (every man specified by his own name,) to compear, within the space of forty days, before his master, where it should happen him to appoint, and be for the time, under the pain of disobedience. But whether this summons was proclaimed by vain persons, night-walkers, or drunken men, for their pastime, or if it was a spirit, I cannot teil truly; but it was shewn to me, that an indweller of the town, Mr. Richard Lawson, being evil disposed, ganging in his gallery-stair foreanent the Cross, hearing this voice proclaiming this summons, thought marvel what it should be, cried on his servant to bring him his purse; and when he had brought him it, he took out a crown, and cast over the stair, saying, 'I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and takes me all whole in the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus his son.' Verily, the author of this, that caused me write the manner of this summons, was a landed gentleman, who was at that time twenty years of age, and was in the town the time of the said summons; and thereafter, when the field was stricken, he swore to me, there was no man that escaped that was called in this summons, but that one man alone which made his protestation, and appealed from the said summons; but all the lave were perished in the field with the king."

Note 26, page 179.—*Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard, and flaxen hair.*

Mr. Scott of Harden, my kind and affectionate friend, and distant relation, has the original of a poetical invitation, addressed from his grandfather to my relative, from which a

few lines in the text are imitated. They are dated, as the epistle in the text, from Mertoun-house, the seat of the Harden family.

" With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,
Free of anxiety and care,
Come hither, Christmas-day, and dine ;
We'll mix sobriety with wine,
And easy mirth with thoughts divine.
We Christians think it holiday,
On it no sin to feast or play ;
Others, in spite, may fast and pray.
No superstition in the use
Our ancestors made of a goose ;
Why may not we, as well as they,
Be innocently blithe that day,
On goose or pie, on wine or ale,
And scorn enthusiastic zeal ?—
Pray: come, and welcome, or plague rott
Your friend and landlord, Walter Scott.

" *Mr. Walter Scott, Lessuden.*"

The venerable old gentleman, to whom the lines are addressed, was the younger brother of William Scott of Raeburn. Being the cadet of a cadet of the Harden family, he had very little to lose ; yet he contrived to lose the small property he had, by engaging in the civil wars and intrigues of the house of Stuart. His veneration for the exiled family was so great, that he swore he would not shave his beard till they were restored ; a mark of attachment, which, I suppose, had been common during Cromwell's usurpation ; for, in Cowley's "Cutter of Coleman Street," one drunken cavalier upbraids another, that, when he was not able to afford to pay a barber, he affected to "wear a beard for the King." I sincerely hope this was not absolutely the original reason of my ancestor's beard ; which, as appears from a portrait in the possession of Sir Henry Hay Macdougall, Bart., and another painted for the famous Dr. Pitcairn,¹ was a beard of a most dignified and venerable appearance.

Note 27, page 198.—*Let the portcullis fall.*

This ebullition of violence in the potent Earl of Angus is not without its example in the real history of the house of Douglas, whose chieftains possessed the ferocity, with the heroic virtues, of

¹ The old gentleman was an intimate of this celebrated genius. By the favour of the late Earl of Kellie, descended on the maternal side from Dr. Pitcairn, my father became possessed of the portrait in question.

a savage state. The most curious instance occurred in the case of Maclellan, Tutor of Bombay, who, having refused to acknowledge the pre-eminence claimed by Douglas over the gentlemen and Barons of Galloway, was seized and imprisoned by the Earl, in his castle of the Thrieve, on the borders of Kirkcudbrightshire. Sir Patrick Gray, commander of King James the Second's guard, was uncle to the Tutor of Bombay, and obtained from the King a "sweet letter of supplication," praying the Earl to deliver his prisoner into Gray's hand. When Sir Patrick arrived at the castle, he was received with all the honour due to a favourite servant of the King's household; but while he was at dinner, the Earl, who suspected his errand, caused his prisoner to be led forth and beheaded. After dinner, Sir Patrick presented the King's letter to the Earl, who received it with great affection of reverence; "and took him by the hand, and led him forth to the green, where the gentleman was lying dead, and showed him the manner, and said, 'Sir Patrick, you are come a little too late; yonder is your sister's son lying, but he wants the head: take his body, and do with it what you will.'—Sir Patrick answered again, with a sore heart, and said, 'My lord, if ye have taken from him his head, dispoone upon the body as ye please;' and with that called for his horse, and leaped thereon; and when he was on horseback, he said to the Earl on his manner, 'My lord, if I live, you shall be rewarded for your labours, that you have used at this time, according to your demerits.'

"At this saying the Earl was highly offended, and cried for horse. Sir Patrick, seeing the Earl's fury, spurred his horse, but he was chased near Edinburgh ere they left him; and had it not been his led horse was so tried and good, he had been taken."—PITSCOTTIE'S *History*, p. 39.

Note 28, page 203.—*The Till by Twisel Bridge.*

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's headquarters were at Barmoor Wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge at Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September, 1513, Surrey marched in a north-westerly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel-Bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his

army between King James and his supplies from Scotland, and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage while struggling with these natural obstacles. I know not if we are to impute James's forbearance to want of military skill, or to the romantic declaration which Pitscottie puts in his mouth, "that he was determined to have his enemies before him on a plain field," and therefore would suffer no interruption to be given, even by artillery, to their passing the river.

The ancient bridge of Twisel, by which the English crossed the Till, is still standing beneath Twisel Castle, a splendid pile of Gothic architecture, as now rebuilt by Sir Francis Blake, Bart., whose extensive plantations have so much improved the country around. The glen is romantic and delightful, with steep banks on each side, covered with copse, particularly with hawthorn. Beneath a tall rock, near the bridge, is a plentiful fountain, called St. Helen's Well.

Note 29, page 207.—*Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray.*

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the Battle of Flodden ; but, so far as is necessary to understand the romance, I beg to remind him, that, when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between King James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight ; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other, when, according to the old poem of "Flodden Field,"

"The English line stretch'd east and west,
And southward were their faces set ;
The Scottish northward proudly prest,
And manfully their foes they met."

The English army advanced in four divisions. On the right, which first engaged, were the sons of Earl Surrey, namely, Thomas Howard, the Admiral of England, and Sir Edmund, the Knight Marshal of the army. Their divisions were separated from each other ; but, at the request of Sir Edmund, his brother's battalion was drawn very near to his own. The centre was commanded by Surrey in person ; the left wing by

Sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Lancashire, and of the palatinate of Chester. Lord Dacres, with a large body of horse, formed a reserve. When the smoke, which the wind had driven between the armies, was somewhat dispersed, they perceived the Scots, who had moved down the hill in a similar order of battle, and in deep silence. The Earls of Huntley and of Home commanded their left wing, and charged Sir Edmund Howard with such success, as entirely to defeat his part of the English right wing. Sir Edmund's banner was beaten down, and he himself escaped with difficulty to his brother's division. The Admiral, however, stood firm; and Dacre advancing to his support with the reserve of cavalry, probably between the interval of the divisions commanded by the brothers Howard, appears to have kept the victors in effectual check. Home's men, chiefly Borderers, began to pillage the baggage of both armies; and their leader is branded, by the Scottish historians, with negligence or treachery. On the other hand, Huntley, on whom they bestow many encomiums, is said, by the English historians, to have left the field after the first charge. Meanwhile the Admiral, whose flank these chiefs ought to have attacked, availed himself of their inactivity, and pushed forward against another large division of the Scottish army in his front, headed by the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, both of whom were slain, and their forces routed. On the left, the success, of the English was yet more decisive; for the Scottish right wing, consisting of undisciplined Highlanders, commanded by Lennox and Argyle, was unable to sustain the charge of Sir Edward Stanley, and especially the severe execution of the Lancashire archers. The King and Surrey, who commanded the respective centres of their armies, were meanwhile engaged in close and dubious conflict. James, surrounded by the flower of his kingdom, and impatient of the galling discharge of arrows, supported also by his reserve under Bothwell, charged with such fury that the standard of Surrey was in danger. At that critical moment, Stanley, who had routed the left wing of the Scottish, pursued his career of victory, and arrived on the right flank, and in the rear of James's division, which, throwing itself into a circle, disputed the battle till night came on. Surrey then drew back his forces; for the Scottish centre not having been broken, and their left wing being victorious, he yet doubted the event of the field. The Scottish army, however, felt their loss, and abandoned the field of battle in disorder, before dawn. They lost, perhaps, from eight to ten thousand men; but that included the very prime of their nobility, gentry, and even clergy. Scarce a family of eminence but has an ancestor killed at Flodden; and there is no province in Scotland, even at this day, where the battle is

mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow. The English lost also a great number of men, perhaps within one-third of the vanquished, but they were of inferior note. See the only distinct detail of the field of Flodden in PINKERTON'S *History*, Book xi.; all former accounts being full of blunders and inconsistency.

The spot from which Clara views the battle must be supposed to have been on a hillock commanding the rear of the English right wing, which was defeated, and in which conflict Marmion is supposed to have fallen.¹

Note 30, page 219.—*Beseem'd the monarch slain.*

There can be no doubt that King James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French Gazette, within a lance's length of the Earl of Surrey; and the same account adds, that none of his division were made prisoners, though many were killed; a circumstance that testifies the desperation of their resistance. The Scottish historians record many of the idle reports which passed among the vulgar of their day. Home was accused, by the popular voice, not only of failing to support the King, but even of having carried him out of the field, and murdered him. And this tale was revived in my remembrance, by an unauthenticated story of a skeleton, wrapped in a bull's hide, and surrounded with an iron chain said to have been found in the well of Home Castle; for which on inquiry, I could never find any better authority, than the sexton of the parish having said, that, *if the well were cleaned out, he would not be surprised at such a discovery.* Home was the chamberlain of the King, and his prime favourite; he had much to lose (in fact did lose all) in consequence of James's death, and nothing earthly to gain by that event: but the retreat, or inactivity, of the left wing, which he commanded, after defeating

¹ [“In 1810, as Sir Carnaby Haggerstone's workmen were digging in Flodden Field, they came to a pit filled with human bones, and which seemed to great extent; but, alarmed at the sight, they immediately filled up the excavation, and proceeded no farther.

“In 1817, Mr. Grey of Millfield Hill found, near the traces of an ancient encampment, a short distance from Flodden Hill, a tumulus, which, on removing, exhibited a very singular sepulchre. In the centre, a large urn was found, but in a thousand pieces. It had either been broken to pieces by the stones falling upon it when digging, or had gone to pieces on the admission of the air. This urn was surrounded by a number of cells formed of flat stones, in the shape of graves, but too small to hold the body in its natural state. These sepulchral recesses contained nothing except ashes, or dust of the same kind as that in the urn.”—*Sykes' Local Records*, (2 vols. 8vo, 1833,) vol. ii. pp. 60 and 109.]

Sir Edmund Howard, and even the circumstance of his returning unhurt, and loaded with spoil, from so fatal a conflict, rendered the propagation of any calumny against him easy and acceptable. Other reports gave a still more romantic turn to the King's fate, and averred that James, weary of greatness after the carnage among his nobles, had gone on a pilgrimage, to merit absolution for the death of his father, and the breach of his oath of amity to Henry. In particular, it was objected to the English, that they could never show the token of the iron belt; which, however, he was likely enough to have laid aside on the day of battle, as encumbering his personal exertions. They produce a better evidence, the monarch's sword and dagger, which are still preserved in the Herald's College in London. Stowe has recorded a degrading story of the disgrace with which the remains of the unfortunate monarch were treated in his time. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell still called the King's stone.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

A POEM.

IN SIX CANTOS.

PREFATORY NOTE.

[“ Upon another occasion,” says Sir Walter, “ I sent up another of these trifles, which, like schoolboys’ kites, served to show how the wind of popular taste was setting. The manner was supposed to be that of a rude minstrel, or Scald, in opposition to the ‘Bridal of Triermain,’ which was designed to belong rather to the Italian school. This new fugitive piece was called ‘Harold the Dauntless ;’ and I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous. It encountered rather an odd fate. My ingenious friend, Mr. James Hogg, had published, about the same time, a work called the ‘Poetic Mirror,’ containing imitations of the principal living poets. There was in it a very good imitation of my own style, which bore such a resemblance to ‘Harold the Dauntless,’ that there was no discovering the original from the imitation ; and I believe that many who took the trouble of thinking upon the subject, were rather of opinion that my ingenious friend was the true, and not the fictitious Simon Pure.”—INTRODUCTION TO THE LORD OF THE ISLES. 1830.]



METELHA.

A simple maiden she ;
The spells in dimpled smile that lie,
And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
With a sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
Were her arms and witchery.

Harold the Dauntless, p. 274

From the drawing by Sir Wm. Boixall, R.A.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.¹

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a mood of mind we all have known,
On drowsy eve, or dark and low'ring day,
When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone,
And nought can chase the lingering hours away.
Dull on our soul falls Fancy's dazzling ray,
And wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of
pain?

The jolly sportsman knows such dreariness,
When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
Clouding that morn which threatens the heath-cock's
brood ;
Of such, in summer's drought, the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain ;
But, more than all, the discontented fair,
Whom father stern, and sterner aunt, restrain
From county-ball, or race occurring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay
prepare.

¹ First published in 1816.]

Ennui !—or, as our mothers call'd thee, Spleen !
To thee we owe full many a rare device ;—
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards; I ween,
The rolling billiard-ball, the rattling dice,
The turning-lathe for framing gimcrack nice ;
The amateur's blotch'd pallet thou mayst claim,
Retort, and air-pump, threatening frogs and mice,
(Murders disguised by philosophic name.)
And much of trifling grave, and much of buxom game.
Then of the books, to catch thy drowsy glance
Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote !
Plays, poems, novels, never read but once ;—
But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
That bears thy name, and is thine antidote ;
And not of such the strain my Thomson sung,
Delicious dreams inspiring by his note,
What time to Indolence his harp he strung ;—
Oh ! might my lay be rank'd that happier list among !

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
For me, I love my study fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale,
Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme ;
While antique shapes of knights and giant grim,
Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the Romancer's tale becomes the Reader's dream

'Tis thus my malady I well may bear,
Albeit outstretch'd, like Pope's own Paridel,
Upon the rack of a too-easy chair ;
And find, to cheat the time, a powerful spell

In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
Or later legends of the Fairy-folk,
Or Oriental tale of Afrite fell,
Of Genii, Talisman, and broad-wing'd Roc,
Though taste may blust and frown, and sober reason
mock.

Oft at such season, too, will rhymes unsought
Arrange themselves in some romantic lay :
The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day.—
These few survive—and proudly let me say,
Court not the critic's smile, nor dread his frown ;
They well may serve to while an hour away,
Nor does the volume ask for more renown,
Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it
down.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

CANTO FIRST.

I.

LIST to the valorous deeds that were done
By Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son !

Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.
Woe to the realms which he coasted ! for there
Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
Rape of maiden, and slaughter of priest,
Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast :
When he hoisted his standard black,
Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
And he burn'd the churches, that heathen Dane,
To light his band to their barks again.

II.

On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
The winds of France had his banners blown ;
Little was there to plunder, yet still
His pirates had foray'd on Scottish hill :
But upon Merry England's coast
More frequent he sail'd, for he won the most.
So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
If a sail but gleam'd white 'gainst the welkin blue,

Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
Burghers hasten'd to man the wall,
Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
Bells were toll'd out, and aye as they rung,
Fearful and faintly the grey brother's sung,
" Bless us, St. Mary, from flood and from fire,
From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire ! "

III.

He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
He enter'd the Humber in fearful hour,
And disembark'd with his Danish power.
Three Earls came against him with all their train,—
Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain.
Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
But the Saxon King was a sire in age,
Weak in battle, in council sage ;
Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought ;
And the Count took upon him the peaceable style
Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

IV.

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
Time will consume the strongest cord ;
That which moulders hemp and steel,
Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
Of the Danish band, whom Count Witikind led,
Many wax'd aged, and many were dead :
Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair ;

He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode.
As he grew feebler, his wildness ceased,
He made himself peace with prelate and priest,
Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
Patiently listed the counsel they said :
Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy and grave,
Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

“Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
Time it is thy poor soul were assoil'd ;
Priests did'st thou slay, and churches burn,
Time it is now to repentance to turn ;
Fiends hast thou worshipp'd, with fiendish rite,
Leave now the darkness, and wend into light :
O ! while life and space are given,
Turn thee yet, and think of heaven ! ”
That stern old heathen his head he raised,
And on the good prelate he steadfastly gazed ;
“ Give me broad lands on the Wear and the Tyne,
My faith I will leave, and I'll cleave unto thine.”

VI.

Broad lands he gave him on Tyne and Wear,
To be held of the church by bridle and spear ;
Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tynedale part,
To better his will, and to soften his heart :
Count Witikind was a joyful man,
Less for the faith than he lands that he wan.
The high church of Durham is dress'd for the day,
The clergy are rank'd in their solemn array :
There came the Count, in a bear-skin warm,
Leaning on Hilda his concubine's arm.

He kneel'd before Saint Cuthbert's shrine,
With patience unwonted at rites divine ;
He abjured he gods of heathen race,
And he bent his head at the font of grace.
But such was the grizzly old proselyte's look.
That the priest who baptized him grew pale and shook ;
And the old monks mutter'd beneath their hood,
" Of a stem so stubborn can never spring good ! "

VII.

Up then arose that grim convertite,
Homeward he hied him when ended the rite ;
The prelate in honour will with him ride,
And feast in his castle on Tyne's fair side.
Banners and banderols danced in the wind,
Monks rode before them, and spearmen behind ;
Onward they pass'd, till fairly did shine
Pennon and cross on the bosom of Tyne ;
And full in front did that fortress lour,
In darksome strength with its buttress and tower :
At the castle gate was young Harold there,
Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.

VIII.

Young Harold was fear'd for his hardihood,
His strength of frame, and his fury of mood.
Rude he was and wild to behold,
Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
Cap of vair nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal day ;
His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
Uncover'd his head, and his sandal unlaced :
His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
And his eyes glanced through them a swarthy glow

A Danish club in his hand he bore,
The spikes were clotted with recent gore ;
At his back a she-wolf, and her wolf-cubs twain,
In the dangerous chase that morning slain.
Rude was the greeting his father he made,
None to the Bishop,—while thus he said :—

IX.

“ What priest-led hypocrite art thou,
With thy humbled look and thy monkish brow,
Like a shaveling who studies to cheat his vow ?
Canst thou be Witikind, the Waster known,
Royal Eric’s fearless son,
Haughty Gunhilda’s haughtier lord,
Who won his bride by the axe and sword ;
From the shrine of St. Peter the chalice who tore
And melted to bracelets for Freya and Thor ;
With one blow of his gauntlet who burst the skull,
Before Odin’s stone, of the Mountain Bull ?
Then ye worshipp’d with rites that to war-gods belong,
With the deed of the brave, and the blow of the strong ;
And now, in thine age, to dotage sune,
Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a shaven monk,—
Lay down thy mail-shirt for clothing of hair,—
Fasting and scourge, like a slave, wilt thou bear ?
Or, at best, be admitted in slothful bower
To batten with priest and with paramour ?
Oh ! out upon thine endless shame !
Each Scald’s high harp shall blast thy fame,
And thy son will refuse thee a father’s name ! ”

Ireful wax’d old Witikind’s look,
His faltering voice with fury shook ;—

“Hear me, Harold of harden'd heart !
Stubborn and wilful ever thou wert.
Thine outrage insane I command thee to cease,
Fear my wrath and remain at peace :—
Just is the debt of repentance I've paid,
Richly the church has a recompense made,
And the truth of her doctrines I prove with my blade.
But reckoning to none of my actions I owe,
And least to my son such accounting will show.
Why speak I to thee of repentance or truth,
Who ne'er from thy childhood knew reason or ruth ?
Hence ! to the wolf and the bear in her den ;
These are thy mates, and not rational men.”

XI.

Grimly smiled Harold, and coldly replied,
“We must honour our sires, if we fear when they chide.
For me, I am yet what thy lessons have made,
I was rocked in a buckler and fed from a blade ;
An infant, was taught to clasp hands and to shout,
From the roofs of the tower when the flame had broke
out ;
In the blood of slain foemen my finger to dip,
And tinge with its purple my cheek and my lip.—
'Tis thou know'st not truth, that hast barter'd in eld,
For a price, the brave faith that thine ancestors held.
When this wolf,” and the carcass he flung on the plain,—
“Shall awake and give food to her nurslings again,
The face of his father will Harold review ;
Till then, aged Heathen, young Christian, adieu !”

XII.

Priest, monk, and prelate stood aghast,
As through the pageant the heathen pas:

A cross-bearer out of the saddle he flung,
Laid his hand on the pommel, and into it sprung.
Loud was the shriek, and deep the groan,
When the holy sign on the earth was thrown !
The fierce old Count unsheathed his brand,
But the calmer prelate stay'd his hand.
" Let him pass free ! —Heaven knows its hour,—
But he must own repentance's power,
Pray and weep, and penance bear,
Ere he hold land by the Tyne and the Wear."
Thus in scorn and in wrath from his father is gone
Young Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XIII.

High was the feasting in Witikind's hall,
Revell'd priests, soldiers, and pagans, and all ;
And e'en the good Bishop was fain to endure
The scandal, which time and instruction might cure:
It were dangerous, he deem'd, at the first to restrain,
In his wine and his wassail, a half-christen'd Dane.
The mead flow'd around, and the ale was drain'd dry,
Wild was the laughter, the song, and the cry ;
With Kyrie Eleison, came clamorously in
The war-songs of Danesmen, Norweyan, and Finn,
Till man after man the contention gave o'er,
Outstretch'd on the rushes that strew'd the hall floor ;
And the tempest within, having ceased its wild rout,
Gave place to the tempest that thunder'd without.

XIV.

Apart from the wassail, in turret alone,
Lay flaxen-hair'd Gunnar, old Ermengarde's son ;
In the train of Lord Harold that Page was the first,
For Harold in childhood had Ermengarde nursed

And grieved was young Gunnar his master should roam,
Unhoused and unfriended, an exile from home.
He heard the deep thunder, the plashing of rain,
He saw the red lightening through shot-hole and pane ;
“And oh !” said the Page, “on the shelterless wold
Lord Harold is wandering in darkness and cold !
What though he was stubborn, and wayward and wild,
He endured me because I was Ermengarde’s child,
And often from dawn till the set of the sun,
In the chase, by his stirrup, unbidden I run ;
I would I were older, and knighthood could bear,
I would soon quit the banks of the Tyne and the Wear :
For my mother’s command, with her last parting breath,
Bade me follow her nursling in life and to death.

XV.

“It pours and it thunders, it lightens amain,
As if Lok, the Destroyer, had burst from his chain !
Accursed by the church, and expell’d by his sire,
Nor Christian nor Dane give him shelter or fire,
And this tempest what mortal may houseless endure ?
Unaided, unmantled, he dies on the moor !
Whate’er comes of Gunnar, he tarries not here.”
He leapt from his couch and he grasp’d to his spear ;
Sought the hall of the feast. Undisturb’d by his tread,
The wassailers slept fast as the sleep of the dead :
“Ungrateful and bestial !” his anger broke forth,
“To forget ’mid your goblets the pride of the North !
And you, ye cowl’d priests, who have plenty in store,
Must give Gunnar for ransom a palfrey and ore.”

XVI.

Then heeding full little of ban or of curse,
He has seized on the Prior of Jorvaux’s purse :

Saint Meneholt's Abbot next morning has miss'd
His mantle, deep furr'd from the cape to the wrist :
'The Seneschal's keys from his belt he has ta'en,
(Well drench'd on that eve was old Hildebrand's brain.)
To the stable-yard he made his way,
And mounted the Bishop's palfrey gay,
Castle and hamlet behind him has cast,
And right on his way to the moorland has pass'd.
Sore snorted the palfrey, unused to face
A weather so wild at so rash a pace ;
So long he snorted, so loud he neigh'd,
There answer'd a steed that was bound beside,
And the red flash of lightning show'd there where lay
His master, Lord Harold, outstretch'd on the clay.

XVII.

Up he started, and thunder'd out, "Stand !"
And raised the club in his deadly hand.
The flaxen-hair'd Gunnar his purpose told,
Show'd the palfrey and proffer'd the gold.
'Back, back, and home, thou simple boy !
Thou canst not share my grief or joy :
Have I not mark'd thee wail and cry
When thou hast seen a sparrow die ?
And canst thou, as my follower should,
Wade ankle-deep through foeman's blood,
Dare mortal and immortal foe,
The gods above, the fiends below,
And man on earth, more hateful still,
The very fountain-head of ill ?
Desperate of life, and careless of death,
Lover of bloodshed, and slaughter, and scathe,
Such must thou be with me to roam,
And such thou canst not be—back, and home !"

XVIII.

Young Gunnar shook like an aspen bough,
As he heard the harsh voice and beheld the dark brow,
And half he repented his purpose and vow.
But now to draw back were bootless shame,
And he loved his master, so urged his claim :
“ Alas ! if my arm and my courage be weak,
Bear with me a while for old Ermengarde’s sake ;
Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar’s faith,
As to fear he would break it for peril of death.
Have I not risk’d it to fetch thee this gold,
This surcoat and mantle to fence thee from cold ?
And, did I bear a baser mind,
What lot remains if I stay behind ?
The priests’ revenge, thy father’s wrath,
A dungeon, and a shameful death.”

XIX.

With gentler look Lord Harold eyed
The page, then turn’d his head aside ;
And either a tear did his eyelash stain,
Or it caught a drop of the passing rain.
“ Art thou an outcast, then ? ” quoth he ;
“ The meeter page to follow me.”
’Twere bootless to tell what climes they sought,
Ventures achieved, and battles fought ;
How oft with few, how oft alone,
Fierce Harold’s arm the field hath won.
Men swore his eye, that flash’d so red
When each other glance was quench’d with dread,
Bore oft a light of deadly flame,
That ne’er from mortal courage came.
Those limbs so strong, that mood so stern,
That loved the couch of heath and fern,

Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
More than to rest on driven down ;
That stubborn frame, that sullen mood,
Men deem'd must come of aught but good ;
And they whisper'd, the great Master Fiend was at one
With Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XX.

Years after years had gone and fled,
The good old Prelate lies lapp'd in lead ;
In the chapel still is shown,
His sculptured form on a marble stone,
With staff and ring and scapulaire,
And folded hands in the act of prayer.
Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting now
On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldingar's brow ;
The power of his crozier he loved to extend
O'er whatever would break, or whatever would bend ;
And now hath he clothed him in cope and in pall,
And the Chapter of Durham has met at his call.
"And hear ye not, brethren," the proud Bishop said,
"That our vassal, the Danish Count Witikind's dead?
All his gold and his goods hath he given
To holy church for the love of heaven,
And hath founded a chantry with stipend and dole,
That priests and that beadsmen may pray for his soul :
Harold his son is wandering abroad,
Dreaded by man and abhorr'd by God ;
Meet it is not, that such should heir
The lands of the church on the Tyne and the Wear,
And at her pleasure, her hallow'd hands
May now resume these wealthy lands."

XXI.

Answer'd good Eustace, a canon old,—
"Harold is tameless, and furious, and bold ;

Ever Renown blows a note of fame,
And a note of fear, when she sounds his name :
Much of bloodshed and much of scathe
Have been their lot who have waked his wrath.
Leave him these lands and lordships still,
Heaven in its hour may change his will ;
But if reft of gold, and of living bare,
An evil counsellor is despair."
More had he said, but the Prelate frown'd,
And murmur'd his brethren who sate around,
And with one consent have they given their doom,
That the church should the lands of Saint Cuthbert
 resume.
So will'd the Prelate ; and canon and dean
Gave to his judgment their loud *amen*.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

'Tis merry in greenwood,—thus runs the old lay,—
In the gladsome month of lively May,
When the wild birds' song on stem and spray
 Invites to forest bower ;
Then rears the ash his airy crest,
Then shines the birch in silver vest,
And the beech in glistening leaves is drest,
And dark between shows the oak's proud breast,
 Like a chieftain's frowning tower ;
Though a thousand branches join their screen,
Yet the broken sunbeams glance between
And tip the leaves with lighter green,
 With brighter tints the flower :
Dull is the heart that loves not then
The deep recess of the wildwood glen,
Where roe and red-deer find sheltering den,
 When the sun is in his power.

II.

Less merry, perchance, is the fading leaf
That follows so soon on the gather'd sheaf
 When the greenwood loses the name ;

Silent is then the forest bound,
Save the redbreast's note, and the rustling sound
Of frost-nipt leaves that are dropping round,
Or the deep-mouth'd cry of the distant hound
 That opens on his game :
Yet then, too, I love the forest wide,
Whether the sun in splendour ride,
And gild its many-colour'd side ;
Or whether the soft and silvery haze,
In vapoury folds, or the landscape strays,
And half involves the woodland maze,
 Like an early widow's veil,
Where wimpling tissue from the gaze
The form half hides, and half betrays,
 Of beauty wan and pale.

III.

Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
Her father a rover of greenwood shade,
By forest statues undismay'd,
 Who lived by bow and quiver ;
Well known was Wulfstane's archery,
By merry Tyne both on moor and lea,
Through wooded Weardale's glens so free,
Well beside Stanhope's wildwood tree,
 And well on Ganslesse river.
Yet free though he trespass'd on woodland game,
More known and more fear'd was the wizard fame
Of Jutta of Rookhope, the Outlaw's dame ;
Fear'd when she frown'd was her eye of flame,
 More fear'd when in wrath she laugh'd ;
For then, 'twas said, more fatal true
To its dread aim her spell-glance flew,
Than when from Wulfstane's bended yew
 Sprung forth the grey-goose shaft.

IV.

Yet had this fierce and dreaded pair,
So Heaven decreed, a daughter fair ;
 None brighter crown'd the bed,
In Britain's bounds, of peer or prince,
Nor hath, perchance, a lovelier since
 In this fair isle been bred.
And nought of fraud, or ire, or ill,
Was known to gentle Metelill,—
 A simple maiden she ;
The spells in dimpled smile that lie,
And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
With the sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
 Were her arms and witchery.
So young, so simple was she yet,
She scarce could childhood's joys forget,
And still she loved, in secret set
 Beneath the greenwood tree,
To plait the rushy coronet,
And braid with flowers her locks of jet,
 As when in infancy ;—
Yet could that heart, so simple, prove
The early dawn of stealing love :
 Ah ! gentle maid, beware !
The power who, now so mild a guest,
Gives dangerous yet delicious zest
To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest,
 Let none his empire share.

V.

One morn, in kirtle green array'd,
Deep in the wood the maiden stray'd,
 And, where a fountain sprung,

She sate her down, unseen, to thread
The scarlet berry's mimic braid,
And while the beads she strung,
Like the blithe lark, whose carol gay
Gives a good-morrow to the day,
So lightsomely she sung.

VI.

Song.

"LORD WILLIAM was born in gilded bower,
The heir of Wilton's lofty tower ;
Yet better loves Lord William now
To roam beneath wild Rookhope's brow ;
And William has lived where ladies fair
With gawds and jewels deck their hair,
Yet better loves the dewdrops still
That pearl the locks of Metelill.

"The pious Palmer loves, I wis,
Saint Cuthbert's hallow'd beads to kiss ;
But I, though simple girl I be,
Might have such homage paid to me ;
For did Lord William see me suit
This necklace of the bramble's fruit,
He fain—but must not have his will—
Would kiss the beads of Metelill.

"My nurse has told me many a tale,
How vows of love are weak and frail ;
My mother says that courtly youth
By rustic maid means seldom sooth.

What should they mean? it cannot be,
That such a warning's meant for me,
For nought—oh ! nought of fraud or ill
Can William mean to Metelill ! ”

VII.

Sudden she stops—and starts to feel
A weighty hand, a glove of steel
Upon her shrinking shoulders laid ;
Fearful she turn'd, and saw, dismay'd
A Knight in plate and mail array'd,
His crest and bearing worn and fray'd,
His surcoat soil'd and riven,
Form'd like that giant race of yore,
Whose long-continued crimes outwore
The sufferance of Heaven.
Stern accents made his pleasure known,
Though then he used his gentlest tone :
“ Maiden,” he said, “ sing forth thy glee.
Start not—sing on—it pleases me.”

VIII.

Secured within his powerful hold,
To bend her knee; her hands to fold,
Was all the maiden might ;
And “ Oh ! forgive,” she faintly said,
“ The terrors of a simple maid,
If thou art mortal wight !
But if—of such strange tales are told,
Unearthly warrior of the wold,
Thou comest to chide mine accents bold,
My mother, Jutta, knows the spell,
At noon and midnight pleasing well
The disembodied ear ;

Oh ! let her powerful charms atone
For aught my rashness may have done,
 And cease thy grasp of fear.”
Then laugh'd the Knight --his laughter's sound
Half in the hollow helmet drown'd ;
His barred visor then he raised,
And steady on the maiden gazed.
He smooth'd his brows, as best he might,
To the dread calm of autumn night,
 When sinks the tempest roar ;
Yet still the cautious fishers eye
The clouds, and fear the gloomy sky,
 And haul their barks on shore.

IX.

“Damsel,” he said, “be wise, and learn
Matters of weight and deep concern :
 From distant realms I come,
And, wanderer long, at length have plann'd
In this my native Northern land
 To seek myself a home.
Nor that alone—a mate I seek ;
She must be gentle, soft, and meek,—
 No lordly dame for me ;
Myself am something rough of mood,
And feel the fire of royal blood,
And therefore do not hold it good
 To match in my degree.
Then, since coy maidens say my face
Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
For a fair lineage to provide,
'Tis meet that my selected bride
 In lineaments be fair ;

I love thine well—till now I ne'er
Look'd patient on a face of fear,
But now that tremulous sob and tear
 Become thy beauty rare.
One kiss—nay, damsel, coy it not !—
And now go seek thy parents' cot,
And say, a bridegroom soon I come,
To woo my love, and bear her home."

X.

Home sprung the maid without a pause,
As leveret 'scaped from greyhound's jaws ;
But still she lock'd, howe'er distress'd,
The secret in her boding breast ;
Dreading her sire, who oft forbade
Her steps should stray to distant glade.
Night came—to her accustom'd nook
Her distaff aged Jutta took,
And by the lamp's imperfect glow,
Rough Wulfstane trimm'd his shafts and bow.
Sudden and clamorous, from the ground
Upstart slumbering brach and hound ;
Loud knocking next the lodge alarms,
And Wulfstane snatches at his arms,
When open flew the yielding door,
And that grim Warrior press'd the floor.

XI.

"All peace be here—What ! none replies ?
Dismiss your fears and your surprise.
'Tis I—that Maid hath told my tale,—
Or, trembler, did thy courage fail ?
It recks not—it is I demand
Fair Metelill in marriage band ;

Harold the Dauntless I, whose name
Is brave men's boast and caitiff's shame.
The parents sought each other's eyes,
With awe, resentment, and surprise :
Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt began
The stranger's size and thewes to scan ;
But as he scann'd, his courage sunk,
And from unequal strife he shrunk,
Then forth, to blight and blemish, flies
The harmful curse from Jutta's eyes ;
Yet, fatal howsoe'er, the spell
On Harold innocently fell !
And disappointment and amaze
Were in the witch's wilder'd gaze.

XII.

But soon the wit of woman woke,
And to the Warrior mild she spoke :
" Her child was all too young."—" A toy,
The refuge of a maiden coy."—
Again, " A powerful baron's heir
Claims in her heart an interest fair."—
" A trifle—whisper in his ear,
That Harold is a suitor here !"—
Baffled at length she sought delay :
" Would not the Knight till morning stay ?
Late was the hour— he there might rest
Till morn, their lodge's honour'd guest."
Such were her words,—her craft might cast,
Her honour'd guest should sleep his last :
" No, not to-night—but soon," he swore,
" He would return, nor leave them more."
The threshold then his huge stride crost,
And soon he was in darkness lost.

XIII.

Appall'd awhile the parents stood,
Then changed their fear to angry mood,
And foremost fell their words of ill
On unresisting Metelill :
Was she not caution'd and forbid,
Forewarn'd, implored, accused, and chid,
And must she still to greenwood roam,
To marshal such misfortune home ?
"Hence, minion—to thy chamber hence—
There prudence learn, and penitence."
She went—her lonely couch to steep
In tears which absent lovers weep ;
Or if she gain'd a troubled sleep,
Fierce Harold's suit was still the theme
And terror of her feverish dream.

XIV.

Scarce was she gone, her dame and sire
Upon each other bent their ire ;
"A woodsman thou, and hast a spear,
And couldst thou such an insult bear ?"
Sullen he said, "A man contends
With men, a witch with sprites and fiends ;
Not to mere mortal wight belong
Yon gloomy brow and frame so strong.
But thou—is this thy promise fair,
That your Lord William, wealthy heir
To Ulrick, Baron of Witton-le-Wear,
Should Metelill to altar bear ?
Do all the spells thou boast'st as thine
Serve but to slay some peasant's kine,
His grain in autumn's storms to steep,

Or thorough fog and fen to sweep,
And hag-ride some poor rustic's sleep?
Is such mean mischief worth the fame
Of sorceress and witch's name?
Fame, which with all men's wish conspires,
With thy deserts and my desires,
To damn thy corpse to penal fires?
Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
What now shall put thy schemes in joint?
What save this trusty arrow's point,
From the dark dingle when it flies,
And he who meets it gasps and dies."

XV.

Stern she replied, "I will not wage
War with thy folly or thy rage;
But ere the morrow's sun be low,
Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know,
If I can venge me on a foe.
Believe the while, that whatsoe'er
I spoke, in ire, of bow and spear,
It is not Harold's destiny
The death of pilfer'd deer to die.
But he, and thou, and yon pale moon,
(That shall be yet more pallid soon,
Before she sink behind the dell,
Thou, she, and Harold too, shall tell
What Jutta knows of charm or spell.'
Thus muttering, to the door she bent
Her wayward steps, and forth she went
And left alone the moody sire,
To cherish or to slake his ire.

XVI.

Far faster than belong'd to age
Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
A priest has met her as she pass'd,
And cross'd himself and stood aghast :
She traced a hamlet—not a cur
His throat would ope, his foot would stir ;
By crouch, by trembling, and by groan,
They made her hated presence known !
But when she trode the sable fell,
Were wilder sounds her way to tell.—
For far was heard the fox's yell,
The black-cock waked and faintly crew,
Scream'd o'er the moss the scared curlew ;
Where o'er the cataract the oak
Lay slant, was heard the raven's croak ;
The mountain-cat, which sought his prey,
Glared, scream'd, and started from her way.
Such music cheer'd her journey lone
To the deep dell and rocking stone :
There, with unhallow'd hymn of praise
She call'd a God of heathen days.

XVII.

Invocation.

“FROM thy Pomeranian throne,
Hewn in rock of living stone,
Where, to thy godhead faithful yet,
Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
And their swords in vengeance whet,
That shall make thine altars wet,
Wet and red for ages more
With the Christians' hated gore,—
Hear me ! Sovereign of the Rock,
Hear me ! mighty Zernebock.

“ Mightiest of the mighty known,
Here thy wonders have been shown ;
Hundred tribes in various tongue
Oft have here thy praises sung ;
Down that stone with Runic seam’d,
Hundred victims’ blood hath stream’d !
Now one woman comes alone,
And but wets it with her own,
The last, the feeblest of thy flock,—
Hear—and be present, Zernebock !

“ Hark ! he comes ! the night-blast cold
Wilder sweeps along the wold ;
The cloudless moon grows dark and dim,
And bristling hair and quaking limb
Proclaim the Master Demon nigh,—
Those who view his form shall die !
Lo ! I stoop and veil my head ;
Thou who ridest the tempest dread,
Shaking hill and rending oak—
Spare me ! spare me ! Zernebock.

“ He comes not yet ! Shall cold delay
Thy votaress at her need repay ?
Thou—shall I call thee god or fiend ?—
Let others on thy mood attend
With prayer and ritual—Jutta’s arms
Are necromantic words and charms ;
Mine is the spell, that, utter’d once,
Shall wake thy Master from his trance,
Shake his red mansion-house of pain,
And burst his seven-times-twisted chain !—
So ! com’st thou ere the spell is spoke ?
I own thy presence, Zernebock.”—

XVIII.

"Daughter of dust," the Deep Voice said,
—Shook while it spoke the vale for dread,
Rock'd on the base that massive stone,
The Evil Deity to own,—
"Daughter of dust! not mine the power
Thou seek'st on Harold's fatal hour.
'Twixt heaven and hell there is a strife
Waged for his soul and for his life,
And fain would we the combat win,
And snatch him in his hour of sin.
There is a star now rising red,
That threatens him with an influence dread :
Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
To use the space before it set.
Involve him with the church in strife,
Push on adventurous chance his life ;
Ourself will in the hour of need,
As best we may, thy counsels speed."
So ceased the Voice ; for seven leagues round
Each hamlet started at the sound ;
But slept again, as slowly died
Its thunders on the hill's brown side.

XIX.

"And is this all," said Jutta stern,
"That thou can'st teach and I can learn?
Hence ! to the land of fog and waste,
There fittest is thine influence placed,
Thou powerless, sluggish Deity !
But ne'er shall Briton bend the knee
Again before so poor a god."
She struck the altar with her rod ;

Slight was the touch, as when at need
A damsel stirs her tardy steed ;
But to the blow the stone gave place,
And, starting from its balanced base,
Roll'd thundering down the moonlight dell,—
Re-echo'd moorland, rock, and fell ;
Into the moonlight tarn it dash'd,
Their shores the sounding surges lash'd,
 And there was ripple, rage, and foam ;
But on that lake, so dark and lone,
Placid and pale the moonbeam shone
 As Jutta hied her home.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

GREY towers of Durham ! there was once a time
I view'd your battlements with such vague hope,
As brightens life in its first dawning prime ;
Not that e'en then came within fancy's scope
A vision vain of mitre, throne, or cope ;
Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
Her flattering dreams would in perspective ope
Some reverend room, some prebendary's stall,—
And thus Hope me deceived as she deceiveth all.¹

Well yet I love thy mix'd and massive piles,
Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,
And long to roam these venerable aisles,
With records stored of deeds long since forgot ;

¹ [In this stanza occurs one of many touches by which, in the introductory passages of *Harold the Dauntless* as of *Triermain*, Sir Walter Scott betrays his half-purpose of identifying the author with his friend William Erskine. That gentleman, the son of an Episcopalian clergyman, a staunch churchman, and a man of the gentlest habits, if he did not in early life design to follow the paternal profession, might easily be supposed to have nourished such an intention—one which no one could ever have dreamt of ascribing at any period of his days to Sir Walter Scott himself.]

There might I share my Surtees'¹ happier lot,
Who leaves at will his patrimonial field
To ransack every crypt and hallow'd spot,
And from oblivion rend the spoils they yield,
Restoring priestly chant and clang of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish—since other cares demand
Each vacant hour, and in another clime ;
But still that northern harp invites my hand,
Which tells the wonder of thine earlier time ;
And fain its numbers would I now command
To paint the beauties of that dawning fair,
When Harold, gazing from its lofty stand
Upon the western heights of Beaurepaire,
Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt by winding Wear.

II.

Fair on the half-seen streams the sunbeams danced,
Betraying it beneath the woodland bank,
And fair between the Gothic turrets glanced
Broad lights, and shadows fell on front and flank,
Where tower and buttress rose in martial rank,
And girdled in the massive donjon Keep,
And from their circuit peal'd o'er bush and bank
The matin bell with summons long and deep,
And echo answer'd still with long-resounding sweep.

III.

The morning mists rose from the ground,
Each merry bird awaken'd round,
As if in revelry ;
Afar the bugles' clanging sound
Call'd to the chase the lagging hound ;
The gale breathed soft and free,

[Robert Surtees of Mainsforth, Esq., F.S.A., author of "*The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*," 3 vols. folio, 1816-20-23.]

And seem'd to linger on its way
To catch fresh odours from the spray,
And waved it in its wanton play
 So light and gamesomely.
The scenes which morning beams reveal,
It sounds to hear, its gales to feel
In all their fragrance round him steal,
It melted Harold's heart of steel,
And, hardly wotting why,
He doff'd his helmet's gloomy pride,
And hung it on a tree beside,
 Laid mace and falchion by,
And on the greensward sate him down,
And from his dark habitual frown
 Relax'd his rugged brow—
Whoever hath the doubtful task
From that stern Dane a boon to ask,
 Were wise to ask it now.

IV.

His place beside young Gunnar took,
And mark'd his master's softening look,
And in his eye's dark mirror spied
The gloom of stormy thoughts subside,
And cautious watch'd the fittest tide
 To speak a warning word.
So when the torrent's billows shrink,
The timid pilgrim on the brink
Waits long to see them wave and sink,
 Ere he dare brave the ford,
And often, after doubtful pause,
His step advances or withdraws :
Fearful to move the slumbering ire
Of his stern lord, thus stood the squire,
 Till Harold raised his eye,

That glanced as when athwart the shroud
Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
The bursting sunbeams fly.

V.

“Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
Offspring of prophetess and bard !
Take harp, and greet this lovely prime
With some high strain of Runic rhyme,
Strong, deep, and powerful ! Peal it round
Like that loud bell’s sonorous sound,
Yet wild by Ælfrith’s, as when the lay
Of bird and bugle hail the day.
Such was my grandsire Eric’s sport,
When dawn gleam’d on his martial court.
Heymar the Scald, with harp’s high sound,
Summon’d the chiefs who slept around ;
Couch’d on the spoils of wolf and bear,
They roused like lions from their lair,
Then rush’d in emulation forth
To enhance the glories of the north.—
Proud Eric, mightiest of thy race,
Where is thy shadowy resting-place ?
In wild Valhalla hast thou quaff’d
From foeman’s skull metheglin draught,
Or wander’st where thy cairn was piled
To frown o’er oceans wide and wild ?
Or have the milder Christians given
Thy refuge in their peaceful heaven ?
Where’er thou art, to thee are known
Our toils endured, our trophies won,
Our wars, our wanderings, and our woes.”
He ceased, and Gunnar’s song arose.

VI.

Song.

"HAWK and osprey scream'd for joy
O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
Crimson foam the beach o'erspread,
The heath was dyed with darker red,
When o'er Eric, Inguar's son,
Dane and Northman piled the stone ;
Singing wild the war-song stern,
'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn !'

"Where eddying currents foam and boil
By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's isle,
The seaman sees a martial form
Half-mingled with the mist and storm.
In anxious awe he bears away
To moor his bark in Stromna's bay,
And murmurs from the bounding stern,
'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn !'

"What cares disturb the mighty dead?
Each honour'd rite was duly paid ;
No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
Thy sword, thy shield, were near thee placed,
Thy flinty couch no tear profaned,
Without, with hostile blood was stain'd ;
Within, 'twas lined with moss and fern,—
Then rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn !—

"He may not rest : from realms afar
Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody hand
On Carmel's cliffs and Jordan's strand,
When Odin's warlike son could daunt
The turban'd race of Termagaunt."——

VII.

“Peace,” said the Knight, “the noble Scald
Our warlike fathers deeds recall’d,
But never strove to soothe the son
With tales of what himself had done.
At Odin’s board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne’er stoop’d to flattery ;
But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to say.”
With doubtful smile young Gunnar eyed
His master’s looks, and nought replied—
But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.
“Is it to me thou timid youth,
Thou fear’st to speak unwelcome truth?
My soul no more thy censure grieves
Than frosts rob laurels of their leaves.
Say on—and yet—beware the rude
And wild distemper of my blood ;
Loath were I that mine ire should wrong
The youth that bore my shield so long,
And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong in will.”—
“Oh !” quoth the page, “even there depends
My counsel—there my warning tends—
Oft seems as of my master’s breast
Some demon were the sudden guest ;
Then at the first misconstrued word
His hand is on the mace and sword,
From her firm seat his wisdom driven
His life to countless dangers given.—
O ! wou’d that Gunnar could suffice
To be the fiend’s last sacrifice,
So that, when glutted with my gore,
He fled and tempted thee no more !”

VIII.

Then waved his hand, and shook his head
The impatient Dane, while thus he said :
“ Profane not, youth—it is not thine
To judge the spirit of our line—
The bold Berserker’s rage divine,
Through whose inspiring, deeds are wrought
Past human strength and human thought.
When full upon his gloomy soul
The champion feels the influence roll,
He swims the lake, he leaps the wall—
Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs the fall—
Unshielded, mail-less, on he goes
Singly against a host of foes ;
Their spears he holds like wither’d reeds,
Their mail like maiden’s silken weeds ;
One ’gainst a hundred will he strive,
Take countless wounds, and yet survive.
Then rush the eagles to his cry
Of slaughter and of victory,—
And blood he quaffs like Odin’s bowl,
Deep drinks his sword,—deep drinks his soul ;
And all that meet him in his ire
He gives to ruin, rout, and fire,
Then, like gorged lion, seeks some den,
And couches till he’s man agen.—
Thou know’st the signs of look and limb,
When ’gins that rage to overbrim—
Thou know’st when I am moved, and why ;
And when thou seest me roll mine eye,
Set my teeth thus, and stamp my foot,
Regard thy safety and be mute ;
But else speak boldly out whate’er
Is fitting that a knight should hear.

I love thee, youth. Thy lay has power
Upon my dark and sullen hour ;—
So Christian monks are wont to say
Demons of old were charm'd away ;
Then fear not I will rashly deem
Ill of thy speech, whate'er the theme."

IX.

As down some strait in doubt and dread
The watchful pilot drops the lead,
And, cautious in the midst to steer,
The shoaling channel sounds with fear ;
So, lest on dangerous ground he swerved,
The Page his master's brow observed,
Pausing at intervals to fling
His hand on the melodious string,
And to his moody breast apply
The soothing charm of harmony,
While hinted half, and half exprest,
This warning song convey'd the rest.

Song.

1.

" Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
And ill when on the breakers driven,—
Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks in air,
And the scared mermaid tears her hair ;
But worse when on her helm the hand
Of some false traitor holds command.

2.

" Ill fares the fainting Palmer, placed
Mid Hebron's rocks or Rana's waste,—

Ill when the scorching sun is high,
 And the expected font is dry,—
 Worse when his guide o'er sand and heath,
 The barbarous Copt, has plann'd his death.

3.

"Ill fares the Knight with buckler cleft,
 And ill when of his helm bereft,—
 Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
 Or from his grasp his falchion wrung ;
 But worse, if instant ruin token,
 When he lists rede by woman spoken."—

X.

"How now, fond boy ?—Canst thou think ill,"
 Said Harold, "of fair Metelill ?"—
 "She may be fair," the Page replied,
 As through the strings he ranged,—
 "She may be fair ; but yet,"—he cried,
 And then the strain he changed,—

Song.

1.

"She may be fair," he sang, "but yet
 Far fairer have I seen
 Than she, for all her locks of jet,
 And eyes so dark and sheen.
 Were I a Danish knight in arms,
 As one day I may be,
 My heart should own no foreign charms,—
 A Danish maid for me.

2.

"I love my father's northern land,
Where the dark pine-trees grow,
And the bold Baltic's echoing strand
Looks o'er each grassy oe.¹
I love to mark the lingering sun,
From Denmark loath to go,
And leaving on the billows bright,
To cheer the short-lived summer night,
A path of ruddy glow.

3.

"But most the northern maid I love,
With breast like Denmark's snow,
And form as fair as Denmark's pine,
Who loves with purple heath to twine
Her locks of sunny glow ;
And sweetly blend that shade of gold
With the cheek's rosy hue,
And Faith might for her mirror hold
That eye of matchless blue.

4.

"'Tis hers the manly sports to love
That southern maidens fear,
To bend the bow by stream and grove,
And lift the hunter's spear.
She can her chosen champion's flight
With eye undazzled see,
Clasp him victorious from the strife,
Or on his corpse yield up her life,—
A Danish maid for me !"

¹ *Oe*—Island.

XI.

Then smiled the Dane—"Thou canst so well
The virtues of our maidens tell,
Half could I wish my choice had been
Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
And lofty soul ;—yet what of ill
Hast thou to charge on Metelill ?"—
"Nothing on her," young Gunnar said,
"But her base sire's ignoble trade.
Her mother, too—the general fame
Hath given to Jutta evil name,
And in her grey eye is a flame
Art cannot hide, nor fear can tame.—
That sordid woodman's peasant cot
Twice have thine honour'd footsteps sought,
And twice return'd with such ill rede
As sent thee on some desperate deed."—

XII.

"Thou errest ; Jutta wisely said,
He that comes suitor to a maid,
Ere link'd in marriage, should provide,
Lands and a dwelling for his bride—
My father's by the Tyne and Wear
I have reclaim'd."—"O, all too dear,
And all too dangerous the prize,
E'en were it won," young Gunnar cries ;—
"And then this Jutta's fresh device,
That thou shouldst seek, a heathen Dane
From Durham's priests a boon to gain,
When thou hast left their vassals slain
In their own halls !"—Flash'd Harold's eye,
Thunder'd his voice—"False Page, you lie !
The castle, hall and tower, is mine,
Built by old Witikind on Tyne.

The wild-cat will defend his den,
Fights for her nest the timid wren ;
And think'st thou I'll forego my right
For dread of monk or monkish knight ?—
Up and away, that deepening bell
Doth of the Bishop's conclave tell.
Thither will I, in manner due,
As Jutta bade, my claim to sue ;
And, if to right me they are loath,
Then woe to church and chapter both !”
Now shift the scene, and let the curtain fall,
And our next entry be Saint Cuthbert's hall.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

FULL many a bard hath sung the solemn gloom
Of the long Gothic aisle and stone-ribb'd roof,
O'er-canopying shrine, and gorgeous tomb,
Carved screen, and altar glimmering far aloof,
And blending with the shade—a matchless proof
Of high devotion, which hath now wax'd cold ;
Yet legends say, that Luxury's brute hoof
Intruded oft within such sacred fold,
Like step of Bel's false priest, track'd in his fane of old.¹

Well pleased am I, howe'er, that when the route
Of our rude neighbours whilome deign'd to come,
Uncall'd, and eke unwelcome, to sweep out
And cleanse our chancel from the rags of Rome,
They spoke not on our ancient fane the doom
To which their bigot zeal gave o'er their own,
But spared the martyr'd saint and storied tomb,
Though papal miracles had graced the stone,
And though the aisles still loved the organ's swelling tone.

¹ [See, in the Apocryphal Books, "The History of Bel and the Dragon."]

And deem not, though 'tis now my part to paint
A prelate sway'd by love of power and gold,
That all who wore the mitre of our Saint
Like to ambitious Aldingar I hold ;
Since both in modern times and days of old
It sate on those whose virtues might atone
Their predecessors' frailties trebly told :

Matthew and Morton we as such may own—
And such (if fame speak truth) the honour'd Barrington.'

II.

But now to earlier and to ruder times,
As subject meet, I tune my rugged rhymes,
Telling how fairly the chapter was met,
And rood and books in seemly order set ;
Huge brass-clasp'd volumes, which the hand
Of studious priest but rarely scann'd,
Now on fair carved desk display'd,
'Twas theirs the solemn scene to aid.
O'erhead with many a scutcheon graced
And quaint devices interlaced,
A 'abyrinth of crossing rows,
The roof in lessening arches shows ;
Beneath its shade placed proud and high,
With footstool and with canopy,
Sate Aldingar, and prelate ne'er
More haughty graced Saint Cuthbert's chair ;
Canons and deacons were placed below,
In due degree and lengthen'd row.
Unmoved and silent each sat there,
Like image in his oaken chair ;

1 [See, for the lives of Bishop Matthew and Bishop Morton, here alluded to, Mr. Surtees's *History of the Bishopric of Durham*: the venerable Shute Barrington, their honoured successor, ever a kind friend of Sir Walter Scott, died in 1826.]

Nor head, nor hand, nor foot they stirr'd,
Nor lock of hair, nor tress of beard ;
And of their eyes severe alone
The twinkle show'd they were not stone.

III.

The Prelate was to speech address'd,
Each head sunk reverent on each breast ;
But ere his voice was heard—without
Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
Offspring of wonder mix'd with fear,
Such as in crowded streets we hear
Hailing the flames, that, bursting out,
Attract yet scare the rabble rout.
Ere it had ceased, a giant hand
Shook oaken door and iron band,
Till oak and iron both gave way,
Clash'd the long bolts, the hinges bray,
And, ere upon angel or saint they can call,
Stands Harold the Dauntless in midst of the hall.

IV.

“ Now save ye, my masters, both rocket and rood,
From Bishop with mitre to Deacon with hood !
For here stands Count Harold, old Witikind's son,
Come to sue for the lands which his ancestors won.’
The Prelate look'd round him with sore troubled eye,
Unwilling to grant, yet afraid to deny ;
While each Canon and Deacon who heard the Dane
 speak,
To be safely at home would have fasted a week :—
Then Aldingar roused him, and answer'd again,
“ Thou suest for a boon which thou canst not obtain ;
The church hath no fiefs for an unchristen'd Dane.

Thy father was wise, and his treasure hath given,
That the priests of a chantry might hymn him to heaven,
And the fiefs which whilome he possess'd as his due,
Have lapsed to the church, and been granted anew
To Anthony Conyers and Alberic Vere,
For the service St. Cuthbert's bless'd banner to bear,
When the bands of the North come to foray the Wear ;
Then disturb not our conclave with wrangling or blame,
But in peace and in patience pass hence as ye came."

V

Loud laugh'd the stern Pagan,—“They're free from the
care
Of fief and of service, both Conyers and Vere,—
Six feet of your chancel is all they will need,
A buckler of stone and a corslet of lead.—
Ho, Gunnar !—the tokens !”—and, sever'd anew,
A head and a hand on the altar he threw.
Then shudder'd with terror both Canon and Monk,
They knew the glazed eye and the countenance shrunk,
And of Anthony Conyers the half-grizzled hair,
And the scar on the hand of Sir Alberic Vere.
There was not a churchman or priest that was there,
But grew pale at the sight, and betook him to prayer.

VI.

Count Harold laugh'd at their looks of fear :
“Was this the hand should your banner bear ?
Was that the head should wear the casque
In battle at the church's task ?
Was it to such you gave the place
Of Harold with the heavy mace ?
Find me between the Wear and Tyne
A knight will wield this club of mine,—

Give him my fiefs, and I will say
There's wit beneath the cowl of grey."
He raised it, rough with many a stain,
Caught from crush'd skull and spouting brain ;
He wheel'd it that it shrilly sung,
And the aisles echoed as it swung,
Then dash'd it down with sheer descent,
And split King Osric's monument.—
"How like ye this music? How trow ye the hand
That can wield such a mace may be reft of its land?
No answer?—I spare ye a space to agree,
And Saint Cuthbert inspire you, a saint if he be.
Ten strides through your chancel, ten strokes on your bell,
And again I am with you—grave fathers, farewell."

VII.

He turn'd from their presence, he clash'd the oak door,
And the clang of his stride died away on the floor ;
And his head from his bosom the Prelate uprears
With a ghost-seer's look when the ghost disappears.
"Ye Priests of Saint Cuthbert, now give me your rede,
For never of counsel had Bishop more need !
Were the arch-fiend incarnate in flesh and in bone,
The language, the look, and the laugh, were his own.
In the bounds of Saint Cuthbert there is not a knight
Dare confront in our quarrel yon goblin in fight ;
Then rede me aright to his claim to reply,
'Tis unlawful to grant, and 'tis death to deny."

VIII.

On ven'son and malmsie that morning had fed
The Cellarer Vinsauf—'twas thus that he said ;
"Delay till to-morrow the Chapter's reply ;
Let the feast be spread fair, and the wine be pour'd high:

If he's mortal he drinks,—if he drinks, **he is ours**—
His bracelets of iron,—his bed in our towers.”
This man had a laughing eye,
Trust not, friends, when such you spy ;
A beaker's depth he well could drain,
Revel, sport, and jest amain—
The haunch of the deer and the grape's bright dye
Never bard loved them better than I ;
But sooner than Vinsauf fill'd me my wine,
Pass'd me his jest, and laugh'd at mine,
Though the buck were of Bearpark, of Bourdeaux the
 vine,
With the dullest hermit I'd rather dine
On an oaken cake and a draught of the Tyne.

IX.

Walwayn the Leech spoke next—he knew
Each plant that loves the sun and dew,
But special those whose juice can gain
Dominion o'er the blood and brain ;
The peasant who saw him by pale moonbeam
Gathering such herbs by bank and stream,
Deem'd his thin form and soundless tread
Were those of wanderer from the dead.—
“ Vinsauf, thy wine,” he said, “ hath power,
Our gyves are heavy, strong our tower ;
Yet three drops from this flask of mine,
More strong than dungeons, gyves, or wine,
Shall give him prison under ground
More dark, more narrow, more profound.
Short rede, good rede, let Harold have—
A dog's death and a heathen's grave.”
I have lain on a sick man's bed,
Watching for hours for the leech's tread,

As if I deem'd that his presence alone
Were of power to bid my pain begone ;
I have list'd his words of comfort given,
As if to oracles from heaven ;
I have counted his steps from my chamber door,
And bless'd them when they were heard no more ;—
But sooner than Walwayn my sick couch should nigh,
My choice were by leech-craft unaided to die.

X.

“ Such service done in fervent zeal
The Church may pardon and conceal,”
The doubtful Prelate said, “ but ne'er
The counsel ere the act should hear.—
Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
The stamp of wisdom is on thy brow ;
Thy days, thy nights, in cloister pent,
Are still to mystic learning lent ;—
Anselm of Jarrow, in thee is my hope,
Thou well mayst give counsel to Prelate or Pope.”

XI.

Answer'd the Prior—“ 'Tis wisdom's use
Still to delay what we dare not refuse ;
Ere granting the boon he comes hither to ask,
Shape for the giant gigantic task ;
Let us see how a step so sounding can tread
In paths of darkness, danger, and dread ;
He may not, he will not, impugn our decree,
That calls but for proof of his chivalry ;
And were Guy to return, or Sir Bevis the Strong,
Our wilds have adventure might cumber them long

The Castle of Seven Shields"—"Kind Anselm, no more!

The step of the Pagan approaches the door."

The churchmen were hush'd.—In his mantle of skin,
With his mace on his shoulder, Count Harold strode in.

There was foam on his lips, there was fire in his eye,

For, chafed by attendance, his fury was nigh.

"Ho ! Bishop," he said, "dost thou grant me my claim ?
Or must I assert it by falchion and flame?—

XII.

"On thy suit, gallant Harold," the Bishop replied

In accents which trembled, "we may not decide,

Until proof of your strength and your valour we saw—

'Tis not that we doubt them, but such is the law."—

"And would you, Sir Prelate, have Harold make sport

For the cows and the shavelings that herd in thy court ?

Say what shall he do?—From the shrine shall he tear

The lead bier of thy patron, and heave it in air,

And through the long chancel make Cuthbert take wing,

With the speed of a bullet dismiss'd from the sling?—"

"Nay, spare such probation," the Cellarer said,

"From the mouth of our minstrels thy task shall be read

While the wine sparkles high in the goblet of gold,

And the revel is loudest, thy task shall be told ;

And thyself, gallant Harold, shall, hearing it, tell

That the Bishop, his cows, and his shavelings, meant
well.'

XIII.

Loud revell'd the guests, and the goblets loud rang,

But louder the minstrel, Hugh Meneville sang ;

And Harold, the hurry and pride of whose soul,

E'en when verging to fury, own'd music's control,

Still bent on the harper his broad sable eye,
And often untasted the goblet pass'd by ;
Than wine, or than wassail, to him was more dear
The minstrel's high tale of enchantment to hear ;
And the Bishop that day might of Vinsauf complain
That his art had but wasted his wine-casks in vain.

XIV.

The Castle of the Seven Shields.

A BALLAD.

THE Druid Urien had daughters seven,
Their skill could call the moon from heaven ;
So fair their forms and so high their fame,
That seven proud kings for their suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from Powis and Wales,
Unshorn was their hair, and unpruned were their nails ;
From Strath-Clwyde was Ewain, and Ewain was lame,
And the red-bearded Donald from Galloway came.

Lot, King of Lodon, was hunchback'd from youth ;
Dunmail of Cumbria had never a tooth ;
But Adolf of Bambrough, Northumberland's heir,
Was gay and was gallant, was young and was fair.

There was strife 'mongst the sisters, for each one would
have
For husband King Adolf, the gallant and brave ;
And envy bred hate, and hate urged them to blows,
When the firm earth was cleft, and the Arch-fiend arose !

He swore to the maidens their wish to fulfil—
They swore to the foe they would work by his will.
A spindle and distaff to each hath he given,
“Now hearken my spell,” said the Outcast of heaven.

“Ye shall ply these spindles at midnight hour,
And for every spindle shall rise a tower,
Where the right shall be feeble, the wrong shall have power
And there shall ye dwell with your paramour.”

Beneath the pale moonlight they sate on the wold,
And the rhymes which they chanted must never be told ;
And as the black wool from the distaff they sped,
With blood from their bosom they moisten'd the thread.

As light danced the spindles beneath the cold gleam,
The castle arose like the birth of a dream—
The seven towers ascended like mist from the ground,
Seven portals defend them, seven ditches surround.

Within that dread castle seven monarchs were wed,
But six of the seven ere the morning lay dead ;
With their eyes all on fire, and their daggers all red,
Seven damsels surround the Northumbrian's bed.

“Six kingly bridegrooms to death we have done,
Six gallant kingdoms King Adolf hath won,
Six lovely brides all his pleasure to do,
Or the bed of the seventh shall be husbandless too.”

Well chanced it that Adolf the night when he wed
Had confess'd and had sain'd him ere boune to his bed ;
He sprung from the couch and his broadsword he drew,
And there the seven daughters of Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted and seal'd,
And hung o'er each arch-stone a crown and a shield ;
To the cells of St. Dunstan then wended his way,
And died in his cloister an anchorite gray.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that castle lies stow'd,
The foul fiends brood o'er them like raven and toad.
Whoever shall guesten these chambers within,
From curfew till matins, that treasure shall win.

But manhood grows faint, as the world waxes old !
There lives not in Britain a champion so bold,
So dauntless of heart, and so prudent of brain,
As to dare the adventure that treasure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall wave with the rye,
Before the rude Scots shall Northumberland fly,
And the flint cliffs of Bambro' shall melt in the sun,
Before that adventure be peril'd and won.

xv.

" And is this my probation ? " wild Harold he said,
" Within a lone castle to press a lone bed ?—
Good even, my Lord Bishop,—Saint Cuthbert to borrow,
The Castle of Seven Shields receives me to-morrow."

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

DENMARK'S sage courtier to her princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ouze! or a whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a partial truth ;
For Fantasy embroiders Nature's veil.
The tints of ruddy eve, or dawning pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud, or silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the rich detail
Which Fantasy with pencil wild portrays,
Blending what seems and is, in the wrapt muser's
gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of earth and stone
Less to the Sorceress's empire given ;
For not with unsubstantial hues alone,
Caught from the varying surge, or vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam, or from flashing levin,
She linnns her pictures : on the earth, as air,
Arise her castles, and her car is driven ;
And never gazed the eye on scene so fair,
But of its boasted charms gave Fancy half the share.

II.

Up a wild pass went Harold, bent to prove,
Hugh Meneville, the adventure of thy lay ;
Gunnar pursued his steps in faith and love,
Ever companion of his master's way.
Midward their path, a rock of granite gray
From the adjoining cliff had made descent,—
A barren mass—yet with her drooping spray
Had a young birch-tree crown'd its battlement,
Twisting her fibrous roots through cranny, flaw, and
rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's thought engage
Till Fancy brought the tear-drop to his eye,
And at his master ask'd the timid Page,
“What is the emblem that a bard shou'd spy
In that rude rock and its green canopy ?”
And Harold said, “Like to the helmet brave
Of warrior slain in flight it seems to lie,
And these same drooping boughs do o'er it wave
Not all unlike the plume his lady's favour gave.”—

“Ah, no !” replied the Page ; “the ill-starr'd love
Of some poor maid is in the emblem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's interwove,
And rooted on a heart to love unknown :
And as the gentle dews of heaven alone
Nourish those drooping boughs, and as the scathe
Of the red lightning rends both tree and stone,
So fares it with her unrequited faith,—
Her sole relief is tears—her only refuge death.”—

III.

“Thou art a fond fantastic boy,”
Harold replied, “to females coy,
Yet prating still of love ;

Even so amid the clash of war
I know thou lovest to keep afar,
Though destined by thy evil star
 With one like me to rove,
Whose business and whose joys are found
Upon the bloody battle-ground.
Yet, foolish trembler as thou art,
Thou hast a nook of my rude heart,
And thou and I will never part ;—
Harold would wrap the world in flame
Ere injury on Gunnar came.”

IV.

The grateful Page made no reply,
But turn'd to Heaven his gentle eye,
And clasp'd his hands, as one who said,
“ My toils—my wanderings are o'erpaid ! ”
Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
Compell'd himself to speech again ;
 And, as they flow'd along,
His words took cadence soft and slow,
And liquid, like dissolving snow,
 They melted into song.

V.

“ What though through fields of carnage wide
I may not follow Harold's stride,
Yet who with faithful Gunnar's pride
 Lord Harold's feats can see ?
And dearer than the couch of pride
He loves the bed of gray wolf's hide,
When slumbering by Lord Harold's side
 In forest, field, or lea.”—

VI.

“Break off!” said Harold, in a tone
Where hurry and surprise were shown,
 With some slight touch of fear,—
“Break off, we are not here alone ;
A Palmer form comes slowly on !
By cowl, and staff, and mantle known,
 My monitor is near.
Now mark him, Gunnar, heedfully ;
He pauses by the blighted tree—
Dost see him, youth ?—Thou couldst not see
When in the vale of Galilee
 I first beheld his form,
Nor when we met that other while
In Cephalonia’s rocky isle,
 Before the fearful storm,—
Dost see him now ?”—The Page, distraught
With terror, answer’d, “I see nought,
 And there is nought to see,
Save that the oak’s scathed boughs fling down
Upon the path a shadow brown,
That, like a pilgrim’s dusky gown,
 Waves with the waving tree.”

VII.

Count Harold gazed upon the oak
As if his eyestrings would have broke,
 And then resolvedly said,—
“Be what it will yon phantom gray—
Nor heaven, nor hell, shall ever say
That for their shadows from his way
 Count Harold turn’d dismay’d :
I’ll speak him, though his accents fill
My heart with that unwonted thrill
 Which vulgar minds call fear.

I will subdue it !"—Forth he strode,
Paused where the blighted oak-tree show'd
Its sable shadow on the road,
And, folding on his bosom broad
His arms, said, " Speak—I hear."

VIII.

The Deep Voice said,—" O wild of will,
Furious thy purpose to fulfil—
Heart-sear'd and unrepentant still,
How long, O Harold, shall thy tread
Disturb the slumbers of the dead ?
Each step in thy wild way thou makest,
The ashes of the dead thou wakest ;
And shout in triumph o'er thy path
The fiends of bloodshed and of wrath.
In this thine hour, yet turn and hear !
For life is brief and judgment near."

IX.

Then ceased The Voice.—The Dane replied
In tones where awe and inborn pride
For mastery strove,—“ In vain ye chide
The wolf for ravaging the flock,
Or with its hardness taunt the rock,—
I am as they—my Danish strain
Sends streams of fire through ev'ry vein.
Amid thy realms of goule and ghost,
Say, is the fame of Eric lost,
Or Witikind's the Waster, known
Where fame or spoil was to be won ;
Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore
They left not black with flame ? —

He was my sire,—and, sprung of him,
That rover merciless and grim,
Can I be soft and tame?
Part hence, and with my crimes no more upbraid me,
I am that Waster's son, and am but what he made me.

X.

The Phantom groan'd ;—the mountain shook around,
The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,
The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,
As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.
“All thou hast said is truth—Yet on the head
Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid,
That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace,
From grave to cradle ran the evil race :—
Relentless in his avarice and ire,
Churches and towns he gave to sword and fire ;
Shed blood like water, wasted every land,
Like the destroying angel's burning brand ;
Fulfill'd whate'er of ill might be invented,
Yes—all these things he did—he did, but he REPENTED !
Perchance it is part of his punishment still,
That his offspring pursues his example of ill.
But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next shake
thee,
Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee ;
If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,
The gate of repentance shall ope for thee NEVER !”—

XI.

“He is gone,” said Lord Harold, and gazed as he spoke ;
“There is nought on the path but the shade of the oak.
He is gone, whose strange presence my feeling oppress'd,
Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.

My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,
And cold dew drops from my brow and my head.—
Ho ! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave ;
He said that three drops would recall from the grave.
For the first time Count Harold owns leech-craft has
 power,
Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower ! ”
The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had fill'd
With the juice of wild roots that his art had distill'd—
So baneful their influence on all that had breath,
One drop had been frenzy, and two had been death.
Harold took it, but drank not ; for jubilee shrill,
And music and clamour were heard on the hill,
And down the steep pathway, o'er stock and o'er stone,
The train of a bridal came blithesomely on ;
There was song, there was pipe, there was timbræl, and
 still
The burden was, “ Joy to the fair Metelil ! ”

XII.

Harold might see from his high stance,
Himself unseen, that train advance
 With mirth and melody ;—
On horse and foot a mingled throng,
Measuring their steps to bridal song
 And bridal minstrelsy ;
And ever when the blithesome rout
Lent to the song their choral shout,
Redoubling echoes roll'd about,
While echoing cave and cliff sent out
 The answering symphony
Of all those mimic notes which dwell
In hollow rock and sounding dell.

XIII.

Joy shook his torch above the band,
By many a various passion fann'd ;—
As elemental sparks can feed
On essence pure and coarsest weed,
Gentle, or stormy, or refined,
Joy takes the colours of the mind.
Lightsome and pure, but unrepress'd,
He fired the bridegroom's gallant breast ;
More feebly strove with maiden fear,
Yet still joy glimmer'd through the tear
On the bride's blushing cheek, that shows
Like dewdrop on the budding rose ;
While Wulfstane's gloomy smile declared
The glee that selfish avarice shared,
And pleased revenge and malice high
Joy's semblance took in Jutta's eye.
On dangerous adventure sped,
The witch deem'd Harold with the dead,
For thus that morn her Demon said :—
" If, ere the set of sun, be tied
The knot 'twixt bridegroom and his bride,
The Dane shall have no power of ill
O'er William and o'er Metelil."
And the pleased witch made answer, " Then
Must Harold have pass'd from the paths of men !
Evil repose may his spirit have,—
May hemlock and mandrake find root in his grave,—
May his death-sleep be dogged by dreams of dismay,
And his waking be worse at the answering day."

XIV.

Such was their various mood of glee
Blent in one shout of ecstasy.

But still when Joy is brimming highest,
Of Sorrow and Misfortune nighest,
Of Terror with her ague cheek,
And lurking Danger, sages speak :—
These haunt each path, but chief they lay
Their snares beside the primrose way.—
Thus found that bridal band their path
Beset by Harold in his wrath.
Trembling beneath his maddening mood,
High on a rock the giant stood ;
His shout was like the doom of death
Spoke o'er their heads that pass'd beneath.
His destined victims might not spy
The reddening terrors of his eye,—
The frown of rage that writhed his face,—
The lip that foam'd like bear's in chase ;—
But all could see—and, seeing, all
Bore back to shun the threaten'd fall—
The fragment which their giant foe
Rent from the cliff and heaved to throw.

XV.

Backward they bore ;—yet are there two
For battle who prepare :
No pause of dread Lord William knew
Ere his good blade was bare ;
And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
But ere the silken cord he drew,
As hurl'd from Hecla's thunder, flew
That ruin through the air !
Full on the outlaw's front it came,
And all that late had human name,
And human face, and human frame,

That lived, and moved, and had free will
To choose the path of good or ill,
Is to its reckoning gone ;
And nought of Wulfstane rests behind,
Save that beneath that stone,
Half-buried in the dinted clay,
A red and shapeless mass there lay
Of mingled flesh and bone !

XVI.

As from the bosom of the sky
The eagle darts amain,
Three bounds from yonder summit high
Placed Harold on the plain.
As the scared wild-fowl scream and fly,
So fled the bridal train ;
As 'gainst the eagle's peerless might
The noble falcon dares the fight,
But dares the fight in vain,
So fought the bridegroom ; from his hand
The Dane's rude mace has struck his brand,
Its glittering fragments strew the sand,
Its lord lies on the plain.
Now, Heaven ! take noble William's part,
And melt that yet unmelted heart,
Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom's slain !

XVII.

Count Harold's frenzied rage is high,
There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are trench'd,
His teeth are set, his hand is clench'd,

The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite !
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar sprung,
Around his master's knees he clung,

And cried, " In mercy spare !
O, think upon the words of fear
Spoke by that visionary Seer,
The crisis he foretold is here,—

Grant mercy,—or despair !"
This word suspended Harold's mood,
Yet still with arm upraised he stood,
And visage like the headsman's rude
That pauses for the sign.

"O mark thee with the blessed rood,"
The Page implored ; "Speak word of good,
Resist the fiend, or be subdued !"

He sign'd the cross divine—
Instant his eye hath human light,
Less red, less keen, less fiercely bright ;
His brow relax'd the obdurate frown,
The fatal mace sinks gently down,

He turns and strides away ;
Yet oft, like revellers who leave
Unfinished feast, looks back to grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve

He granted to his prey.
Yet still of forbearance one sign hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made one step towards heaven.

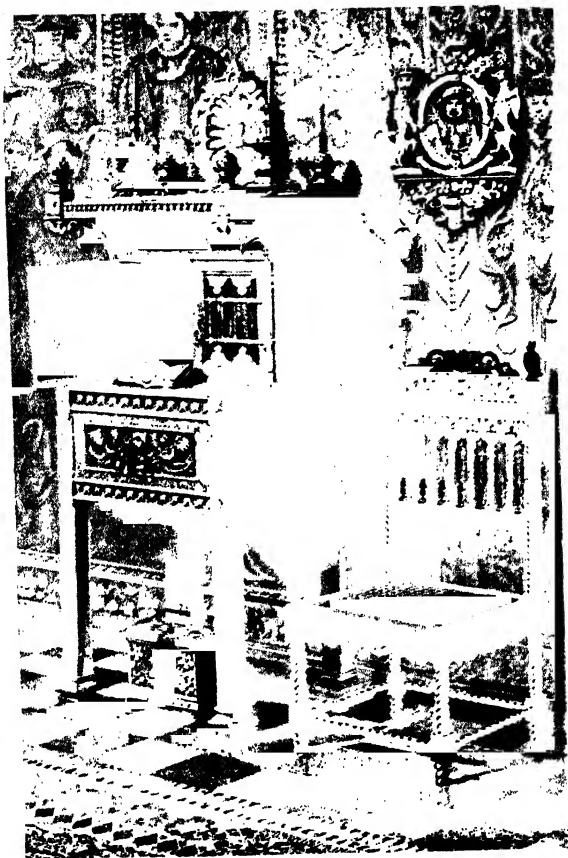
XVIII.

But though his dreaded footsteps part,
Death is behind and shakes his dart ;
Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dying !—

Bring odours—essences in haste—
And lo ! a flasket richly chased,—
But Jutta the elixir proves
Ere pouring it for those she loves—
Then Walwayn's potion was not wasted,
For when three drops the hag had tasted,
 So dismal was her yell,
Each bird of evil omen woke,
The raven gave his fatal croak,
And shrick'd the night-crow from the oak,
The screech-owl from the thicket broke,
 And flutter'd down the dell !
So fearful was the sound and stern,
The slumbers of the full-gorged erne
Were startled, and from furze and fern
 Of forest and of fell,
The fox and famish'd wolf replied,
(For wolves then prowld the Cheviot side,)
From mountain head to mountain head
The unhallow'd sounds around were sped ;
But when their latest echo fled,
The sorceress on the ground lay dead.

XIX.

Such was the scene of blood and woes,
With which the bridal morn arose
 Of William and of Metelill ;
But oft, when dawning 'gins to spread,
The summer-morn peeps dim and red
 Above the eastern hill,
Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
The King of Splendour walks abroad ;
So, when this cloud had pass'd away,
Bright was the noontide of their day,
And all serene its setting ray.



IN THE CASTLE OF THE SEVEN PROUD SHIELDS

With throne begilt, and canopy of pall,
And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments scar
Frail as the spider's mesh did the rich woot appear.

Harold the Daneless, p. 323

From the drawing by A. W. N. Pugin

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

WELL do I hope that this my minstrel tale
Will tempt no traveller from southern fields,
Whether in tilbury, barouche, or mail,
To view the Castle of these Seven Proud Shields
Small confirmation its condition yields
To Meneville's high lay,—No towers are seen
On the wild heath, but those that Fancy builds,
And, save a fosse that tracks the moor with green,
Is nought remains to tell of what may there have been.

And yet grave authors, with the no small waste
Of their grave time, have dignified the spot
By theories, to prove the fortress placed
By Roman bands, to curb the invading Scot.
Hutchinson, Horsley, Camden, I might quote,
But rather choose the theory less civil
Of boors, who, origin of things forgot,
Refer still to the origin of evil,
And for their master-mason choose that master-fiend the
Devil.

II.

Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-built towers
That stout Count Harold bent his wondering gaze,

When evening dew was on the heather flowers,
And the last sunbeams made the mountain blaze,
And tinged the battlements of other days
With the bright level light ere sinking down.—
Illumined thus, the dauntless Dane surveys
The Seven Proud Shields that o'er the portal frown,
And on their blazons traced high marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his armour-coat,
And Rhys of Powis-land a couchant stag ;
Strath-Clwyd's strange emblem was a stranded boat,
Donald of Galloway's a trotting nag ;
A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile Lodon's brag ;
A dudgeon dagger was by Dunmail worn ;
Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-beat crag
Surmounted by a cross—such signs were borne
Upon these antique shields, all wasted now and worn.

III.

These scann'd, Count Harold sought the castle-door,
Whose ponderous bolts were rusted to decay ;
Yet till that hour adventurous knight forbore
The unobstructed passage to essay.
More strong than armed warders in array,
And obstacle more sure than bolt or bar,
Sat in the portal Terror and Dismay,
While Superstition, who forbade to war
With foes of other mould than mortal clay,
Cast spells across the gate, and barr'd the onward way.

Vain now those spells ; for soon with heavy clank
The feebly-fasten'd gate was inward push'd,
And, as it oped, through that emblazon'd rank
Of antique shields, the wind of evening rush'd

With sound most like a groan, and then was hush'd.
Is none who on such spot such sounds could hear
But to his heart the blood had faster rush'd ;
Yet to hold Harold's breast that throb was dear—
It spoke of danger nigh, but had no touch of fear.

IV.

Yet Harold and his Page no signs have traced.
Within the castle, that of danger show'd ;
For still the halls and courts were wild and waste,
As through their precincts the adventurers trode.
The seven huge towers rose stately, tall, and broad,
Each tower presenting to their scrutiny
A hall in which a king might make abode,
And fast beside, garnish'd both proud and high,
Was placed a bower for rest in which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had been,
Deck'd stood the table in each gorgeous hall ;
And yet it was two hundred years, I ween,
Since date of that unhallow'd festival.
Flagons, and ewers, and standing cups, were all
Of tarnish'd gold, or silver nothing clear,
With throne begilt, and canopy of pall,
And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments sear—
Frail as the spider's mesh did that rich woof appear.

In every bower, as round a hearse, was hung
A dusky crimson curtain o'er the bed,
And on each couch in ghastly wise were flung
The wasted relics of a monarch dead ;

Barbaric ornaments around were spread,
Vests twined with gold, and chains of precious stone,
And golden circlets, meet for monarch's head ;
While grinn'd, as if in scorn amongst then thrown,
The wearer's fleshless skull, alike with dust bestrown.

For these were they who, drunken with delight,
On pleasure's opiate pillow laid their head,
For whom the bride's shy footstep, slow and light,
Was changed ere morning to the murderer's tread.
For human bliss and woe in the frail thread
Of human life are all so closely twined,
That till the shears of Fate the texture shred,
The close succession cannot be disjoin'd,
Nor dare we, from one hour, judge that which comes
behind.

VI.

But where the work of vengeance had been done,
In that seventh chamber, was a sterner sight ;
There of the witch-brides lay each skeleton,
Still in the posture as to death when dight.
For this lay prone, by one blow slain outright ;
And that, as one who struggled long in dying ;
One bony hand held knife, as if to smite ;
One bent on fleshless knees, as mercy crying ;
One lay across the door, as kill'd in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this charnel-house to see,—
For his chafed thought return'd to Metelill ;
And " Well," he said, " hath woman's perfidy,
Empty as air, as water volatile,
Been here avenged.—The origin of ill
Through woman rose, the Christian doctrine saith
Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy minstrel skill
Can show example where a woman's breath
Hath made a true-love vow, and, tempted, kept her faith."

VII

The minstrel-boy half smiled, half sigh'd,
And his half-filling eyes he dried,
And said, "The theme I should but wrong,
Unless it were my dying song,
(Our Scalds have said, in dying hour
The Northern harp has treble power,)
Else could I tell of woman's faith,
Defying danger, scorn, and death.
Firm was that faith,—as diamond stone
Pure and unflaw'd,—her love unknown,
And unrequited ;—firm and pure,
Her stainless faith could all endure ;
From clime to clime,—from place to place,—
Through want, and danger, and disgrace,
A wanderer's wayward steps could trace.—
All this she did, and guerdon none
Required, save that her burial-stone
Should make at length the secret known,
Thus hath a faithful woman done.'—
Not in each breast such truth is laid,
But Eivir was a Danish maid."—

VIII.

"Thou art a wild enthusiast," said
Count Harold, "for thy Danish maid ;
And yet, young Gunnar, I will own
Hers were a faith to rest upon.
But Eivir sleeps beneath her stone,
And all resembling her are gone.
What maid e'er show'd such constancy
In plighted faith, like thine to me ?
But couch thee, boy ; the darksome shade
Falls thickly round, nor be dismay'd
Because the dead are by.

They were as we ; our little day
O'erspent, and we shall be as they.
Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou laid,
Thy couch upon my mantle made,
That thou mayst think, should fear invade,
 Thy master slumbers nigh."
Thus couch'd they in that dread abode,
Until the beams of dawning glow'd.

IX.

An alter'd man Lord Harold rose,
When he beheld that dawn uncloset—
 There's trouble in his eyes,
And traces on his brow and cheek
Of mingled awe and wonder speak :
 " My page," he said, " arise ;—
Leave we this place, my page."—No more
He utter'd till the castle door
They cross'd—but there he paused and said,
" My wildness hath awaked the dead—
 Disturb'd the sacred tomb !
Methought this night I stood on high,
Where Hecla roars in middle sky,
And in her cavern'd gulfs could spy
 The central place of doom ;
And there before my mortal eye
Souls of the dead came flitting by,
Whom fiends, with many a fiendish cry,
 Bore to that evil den !
My eyes grew dizzy, and my brain
Was wilder'd as the elvish train,
With shriek and howl, dragg'd on amain
 Those who had late been men.

X.

“With haggard eyes and streaming hair,
Jutta the Sorceress was there,
And there pass’d Wulfstane, lately slain,
All crush’d and foul with bloody stain.—
More had I seen, but that arose
A whirlwind wild, and swept the snows ;
And with such sound as when at need
A champion spurs his horse to speed,
Three armed knights rush on, who lead
Caparison’d a sable steed.
Sable their harness, and there came
Through their closed visors sparks of flame.
The first proclaim’d, in sounds of fear,
‘Harold the Dauntless, welcome here !’
The next cried, ‘Jubilee ! we’ve won
Count Witikind the Waster’s son !’
And the third rider sternly spoke,
‘Mount, in the name of Zernebock !—
From us, O Harold, were thy powers,—
Thy strength, thy dauntlessness, are ours ;
Nor think, a vassal thou of hell,
With hell can strive.’ The fiend spoke true !
My inmost soul the summons knew,
As captives know the knell
That says the headsman’s sword is bare,
And, with an accent of despair,
Commands them quit their cell.
I felt resistance was in vain,
My foot had that fell stirrup ta’en
My hand was on the fatal mane,
When to my rescue sped
That Palmer’s visionary form,
And—like the passing of a storm—
The demons yell’d and fled !

XI.

“ His sable cowl, flung back, reveal’d
The features it before conceal’d ;
 And, Gunnar, I could find
In him whose counsels strove to stay
So oft my course on wilful way,
 My father Witikind !
Doom’d for his sins, and doom’d for mine,
A wanderer upon earth to pine
Until his son shall turn to grace,
And smooth for him a resting-place.—
Gunnar, he must not haunt in vain
This world of wretchedness and pain :
I’ll tame my wilful heart to live
In peace—to pity and forgive—
And thou, for so the Vision said,
Must in thy Lord’s repentance aid.
Thy mother was a prophetess,
He said, who by her skill could guess
How close the fatal textures join
Which knit thy thread of life with mine ;
Then, dark, he hinted of disguise
She framed to cheat too curious eyes,
That not a moment might divide
Thy fated footsteps from my side.
Methought while thus my sire did teach,
I caught the meaning of his speech,
Yet seems its purport doubtful now.”
His hand then sought his thoughtful brow
Then first he mark’d, that in the tower
His glove was left at waking hour.

XII.

Trembling at first, and deadly pale,
Had Gunnar heard the vision’d tale ;

But when he learn'd the dubious close,
He blush'd like any opening rose,
And, glad to hide his tell-tale cheek,
Hied back and glove of mail to seek ;
When soon a shriek of deadly dread
Summon'd his master to his aid.

XIII.

What sees Count Harold in that bower,
So late his resting-place ?—
The semblance of the Evil Power,
Adored by all his race !
Odin in living form stood there,
His cloak the spoils of Polar bear ;
For plummy crest a meteor shed
Its gloomy radiance o'er his head,
Yet veil'd its haggard majesty
To the wild lightnings of his eye.
Such height was his, as when in stone
O'er Upsal's giant altar shown :
So flow'd his hoary beard ;
Such was his lance of mountain-pine,
So did his sevenfold buckler shine ;—
But when his voice he rear'd,
Deep, without harshness, slow and strong,
The powerful accents roll'd along,
And, while he spoke, his hand was laid
On captive Gunnar's shrinking head.

XIV.

"Harold," he said, "what rage is thine,
To quit the worship of thy line,
To leave thy Warrior-God ?—

With me is glory or disgrace,
Mine is the onset and the chase,
Embattled hosts before my face
 Are wither'd by a nod.
Wilt thou then forfeit that high seat
Deserved by many a dauntless feat,
Among the heroes of thy line,
Eric and fiery Thorarine?—
Thou wilt not. Only I can give
The joys for which the valiant live,
Victory and vengeance—only I
Can give the joys for which they die,
The immortal tilt—the banquet full,
The brimming draught from foeman's skull.
Mine art thou, witness this thy glove,
The faithful pledge of vassal's love.”—

XV.

“Tempter,” said Harold, firm of heart,
“I charge thee, hence! whate'er thou art,
I do defy thee—and resist
The kindling frenzy of my breast,
Waked by thy words; and of my mail,
Nor glove, nor buckler, splent, nor nail,
Shall rest with thee—that youth release,
And God, or Demon, part in peace.”—
“Eivir,” the Shape replied, “is mine,
Mark'd in the birth-hour with my sign.
Think'st thou that priest with drops of spray
Could wash that blood-red mark away?
Or that a borrow'd sex and name
Can abrogate a Godhead's claim?”
Thrill'd this strange speech through Harold's brain,
He clench'd his teeth in high disdain,

For not his new-born faith subdued
Some tokens of his ancient mood.—
“ Now, by the hope so lately given
Of better trust and purer heaven,
I will assail thee, fiend ! ”—Then rose
His mace, and with a storm of blows
The mortal and the Demon close.

XVI.

Smoke roll'd above, fire flash'd around,
Darken'd the sky and shook the ground ;
But not the artillery of hell,
The bickering lightning, nor the rock
Of turrets to the earthquake's shock,
Could Harold's courage quell.
Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
And blows on blows resistless heap'd,
Till quail'd that Demon Form,
And—for his power to hurt or kill
Was bounded by a higher will—
Evanish'd in the storm.
Nor paused the Champion of the North
But raised, and bore his Eivir forth,
From that wild scene of fiendish strife,
To light, to liberty, and life !

XVII.

He placed her on a bank of moss,
A silver runnel bubbled by,
And new-born thoughts his soul engross
And tremors yet unknown across
His stubborn sinews fly,
The while with timid hand the dew
Upon her brow and neck he threw ..

And mark'd how life with rosy hue
 On her pale cheek revived anew,
 And glimmer'd in her eye.
 Inly he said, "That silken tress,—
 What blindness mine that could not guess !
 Or how could page's rugged dress
 That bosom's pride belie ?
 O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
 In search of blood and death to rave,
 With such a partner nigh !"

XVIII.

Then in the mirror'd pool he peer'd,
 Blamed his rough locks and shaggy beard,
 The stains of recent conflict clear'd,—
 And thus the Champion proved,
 That he fears now who never fear'd,
 And loves who never loved.
 And Eivir - life is on her cheek,
 And yet she will not move or speak,
 Nor will her eyelid fully ope ;
 Perchance it loves, that half-shut eye,
 Through its long fringe, reserved and shy,
 Affection's opening dawn to spy ;
 And the deep blush, which bids its dye
 O'er cheek, and brow, and bosom fly,
 Speaks shame-facedness and hope.

XIX.

But vainly seems the Dane to seek
 For terms his new-born love to speak,—
 For words, save those of wrath and wrong
 Till now were strangers to his tongue
 So, when he raised the blushing maid,
 In blunt and honest terms he said,

'Twere well that maids, when lovers woo,
Heard none more soft, were all as true,)
"Elvir ! since thou for many a day
Hast follow'd Harold's wayward way,
It is but meet that in the line
Of after-life I follow thine.
To-morrow is Saint Cuthbert's tide,
And we will grace his altar's side,
A Christian Knight and Christian bride ;
And of Witikind's son shall the marvel be said,
That on the same morn he was christen'd and wed."

CONCLUSION.

AND now, Ennui, what ails thee, weary maid ?
And why these listless looks of yawning sorrow ?
No need to turn the page, as if 'twere lead,
Or fling aside the volume till to-morrow.—
Be cheer'd—'tis ended—and I will not borrow,
To try thy patience more, one anecdote
From Bartholine, or Perinskiold, or Snorro.
Then pardon thou thy minstrel, who hath wrote
A Tale six cantos long, yet scorn'd to add a note.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

A POEM.

“Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,
And Albert rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,
With Europe's chosen sons, in arm's renown'd,
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,
Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd,—
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.”

AKENSIDE

TO

HER GRACE

THE

DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON,

PRINCESS OF WATERLOO,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING VERSES

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.¹

I.

FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hour
Peal'd over orchard and canal,
With voice prolong'd and measured fall,
From proud St. Michael's tower ;
Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak between,
Spreads deep and far a pathless screen,
Of tangled forest ground.
Stems planted close by stems defy
The adventurous foot—the curious eye
For access seeks in vain ;
And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strew'd on the blighted ground, receives
Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
No opening glade dawns on our way,

¹ It may be some apology for the imperfections of this poem, that it was composed hastily, and during a short tour upon the Continent, when the Author's labours were liable to frequent interruption ; but its best apology is, that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo Subscription Abbotsford, 1815.

No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
 Our woodland path has cross'd ;
 And the straight causeway which we tread,
 Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
 Unvarying through the unvaried shade
 Until in distance lost.

II.

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds ;
 In groups the scattering wood recedes,
 Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
 And corn-fields, glance between ;
 The peasant at his labour blithe,
 Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe :
 But when these ears were green,
 Placed close within destruction's scope,
 Full little was that rustic's hope
 Their ripening to have seen !
 And, lo, a hamlet and its fane :—
 Let not the gazer with disdain
 Their architecture view ;
 For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
 And disproportioned spire are thine,
 Immortal WATERLOO !

VII.

Fear not the heat, though full and high
 The sun has scorch'd the autumn sky,
 And scarce a forest straggler now
 To shade us spreads a greenwood bough ;

¹ The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short scythe, which he holds in his right hand. They carry on this double process with great spirit and dexterity.

These fields have seen a hotter day
Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
Yet one mile on—yon shatter'd hedge
Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge
 Looks on the field below,
And sinks so gently on the dale,
That not the folds of Beauty's veil
 In easier curves can flow.
Brief space from thence, the ground again
Ascending slowly from the plain,
 Forms an opposing screen,
Which, with its crest of upland ground,
Shuts the horizon all around.
 The soften'd vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread ;
Not the most timid maid need dread
To give her snow-white palfrey head
 On that wide stubble ground ;
Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush, are there,
Her course to intercept or scare,
 Nor fosse nor fence are found,
Save where, from out her shatter'd bowers,
Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

IV.

Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene,
Can tell of that which late hath been ?—
 A stranger might reply,
“ The bare extent of stubble-plain
Seems lately lighten'd of its grain ;
And yonder sable tracts remain
Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,
 When harvest-home was nigh.
On these broad spots of trampled ground,

Perchance the rustics danced such round,
As Teniers loved to draw ;
And where the earth seems scorch'd by flame,
To dress the homely feast they came
And toil'd the kerchief'd village dame
Around her fire of straw."

V.

So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems,
Of that which is from that which seems :—
But other harvests here,
Than that which peasant's scythe demands,
Was gather'd in by sterner hands,
With bayonet, blade, and spear.
No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest thin and cheap !
Heroes before each fatal sweep,
Fell thick as ripen'd grain ;
And ere the darkening of the day,
Piled high as autumn shocks, there lay
The ghastly harvest of the fray,
The corpses of the slain.

VI.

Ay, look again—that line so black
And trampled marks the bivouack.
Yon deep-graved ruts the artillery's track,
So often lost and won ;
And close beside, the harden'd mud
Still shows, where, fetlock-deep in blood,
The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood
Dash'd the hot war-horse on.
These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell—

And feel'st thou not the tainted steam,
That recks against the sultry beam,
From yonder trenched mound ?
The pestilential fumes declare
That Carnage has replenish'd there
Her garner-house profound.

VII.

Far other harvest-home and feast,
Than claims the boor from scythe released,
On these scorch'd fields were known !
Death hover'd o'er the maddening rout,
And, in the thrilling battle-shout,
Sent for the bloody banquet out
A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy,
Well could his ear in ecstasy
Distinguish every tone
That fill'd the chorus of the fray—
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadron's wild hurra,
From the wild clang that mark'd their way,—
Down to the dying groan,
And the last sob of life's decay
When breath was all but flown.

VIII.

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life
Feast on !—but think not that a strife,
With such promiscuous carnage rife,
Protracted space may last ;
The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
And cease when these are past.

Vain hope !—that morn's o'erclouded sun
Heard the wild shout of fight begun
Ere he attain'd his height,
And through the war-smoke, volumed high,
Still peals that unremitted cry,
Though now he stoops to night.
For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
Fresh succours from the extended head
Of either hill the contest fed ;
Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns paused not,
Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot ;
For all that war could do
Of skill and force was proved that day,
And turn'd not yet the doubtful fray
On bloody Waterloo.

IX.

Pale Brussels ! then what thoughts were thine,¹
When ceaseless from the distant line
Continued thunders came !
Each burgher held his breath, to hear
These forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame.
What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
When rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded show'd their mangled plight
In token of the unfinish'd fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain !
How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell Invader come,

¹ It was affirmed by the prisoners of war, that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory brand !—
Cheer thee, fair City ! From yon stand,
Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
 Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood,
And all unwont to be withstood,
 He fires the fight again.

X.

“ On ! On ! ” was still his stern exclaim ;
“ Confront the battery's jaws of flame !
 Rush on the levell'd gun !
My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance !
Each Hulan forward with his lance,
My Guard—My Chosen—charge for France,
 France and Napoleon ! ” ¹
Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,
Greeting the mandate which sent out
Their bravest and their best to dare
The fate their leader shunn'd to share.²
But HE, his country's sword and shield,
Still in the battle-front reveal'd,
Where danger fiercest swept the field,
 Came like a beam of light,
In action prompt, in sentence brief—
“ Soldiers, stand firm,” exclaim'd the Chief,
 “ England shall tell the fight ! ” ³

XI.

On came the whirlwind—like the last
But fiercest sweep of tempest-blast—

¹ [See Note 1.]

² [See Note 2.]

³ In riding up to a regiment which was hard pressed, the Duke called to the men, “ Soldiers, we must never be beat,—what will they say in England ? ” It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

On came the whirlwind—steel-gleams broke
Like lightning through the rolling smoke ;

The war was waked anew,
Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
Their showers of iron threw.

Beneath their fire, in full career,
Rush'd on the ponderous cuirassier,
The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
And hurrying as to havoc near,

The cohorts' eagles flew.
In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
The advancing onset roll'd along,
Forth harbinger'd by fierce acclaim,
That, from the shroud of smoke and flame,
Peal'd wildly the imperial name.

XII

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host ;
For not an eye the storm that view'd
Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
Nor was one forward footstep staid,
As dropp'd the dying and the dead.
Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
Fast they renew'd each serried square ;
And on the wounded and the slain
Closed their diminish'd files again,
Till from their line scarce spears' lengths three,
Emerging from the smoke they see
Helmet, and plume, and panoply,—
Then waked their fire at once !
Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,

As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day.
Then down went helm and lance,
Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent ;
And, to augment the fray,
Wheel'd full against their staggering flanks,
The English horsemen's foaming ranks
Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds
The clash of swords—the neigh of steeds—
As plies the smith his clanging trade,¹
Against the cuirass rang the blade ;
And while amid the close array
The well-served cannon rent their way,
And while amid their scatter'd band
Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
Recoil'd in common rout and fear,
Lancer and guard and cuirassier,
Horsemen and foot,—a mingled host,
Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

XIII.

Then, WELLINGTON ! thy piercing eye
This crisis caught of destiny—
The British host had stood
That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance
As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
But when thy voice had said, “ Advance ! ”
They were their ocean's flood.—
O Thou, whose inauspicious aim
Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,

¹ A private soldier of the 95th regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to “*a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles.*”

Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
The terrors of yon rushing tide ?
Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of level'd steel,¹
Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,
And other standards fly ?—
Think not that in yon columns, file
Thy conquering troops from Distant Dyle—
Is Blucher yet unknown ?
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
(Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,)
What notes of hate and vengeance thrill
In Prussia's trumpet tone ?—
What yet remains ?—shall it be thine
To head the relics of thy line
In one dread effort more ?—
The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
And thou canst tell what fortune proved
That Chieftain, who, of yore,
Ambition's dizzy paths essay'd,
And with the gladiator's aid
For empire enterprised—
He stood the cast his rashness play'd,
Left not the victims he had made,
Dug his red grave with his own blade,
And on the field he lost was laid,
Abhorr'd—but not despised.

XIV.

But if revolves thy fainter thought
On safety—howsoever bought,

¹ [See Note 3.]

Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
Though twice ten thousand men have died
 On this eventful day,
To gild the military fame
Which thou, for life, in traffic tame
 Wilt barter thus away.
Shall future ages tell this tale
Of inconsistency, faint and frail?
And art thou He, of Lodi's bridge,
Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge !
 Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
That, swell'd by winter storm and shower,
Rolls down in turbulence of power,
 A torrent fierce and wide,
Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
 Whose channel shows display'd
The wrecks of its impetuous course,
But not one symptom of the force
 By which these wrecks were made !

XV.

Spur on thy way !—since now thine ear
Has brook'd thy veterans' wish to hear,
 Who, as thy flight they eyed,
Exclaim'd,—while tears of anguish came,
Wrung forth by pride, and rage, and shame,—
 “O, that he had but died !”
But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
Look, ere thou leavest the fatal hill,
 Back on yon broken ranks—
Upon whose wild confusion gleams
The moon, as on the troubled streams
 When rivers break their banks,

And, to the ruin'd peasant's eye,
Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
 Down the dread current hurl'd—
So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
Of warriors, who, when morn begun,
 Defied a banded world.

XVI.

List—frequent to the hurrying rout,
The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
Tells, that upon their broken rear
Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.
 So fell a shriek was none,
When Beresina's icy flood
Redden'd and thaw'd with flame and blood,
And, pressing on thy desperate way,
Raised oft and long their wild hurra,
 The children of the Don.
Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
So ominous, when, all bereft
Of aid, the valiant Polack left—
Ay, left by thee—found soldier's grave
In Leipzig's corpse-encumber'd wave.
Fate, in those various perils past,
Reserved thee still some future cast ;
On the dread die thou now hast thrown,
Hangs not a single field alone,
Nor one campaign—thy martial fame,
Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
 Have felt the final stroke ;
And now, o'er thy devoted head
The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
 The last dread seal is broke.

XVII.

Since live thou wilt—refuse not now
Before these demagogues to bow,
Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
Who shall thy once imperial fate
Make wordy theme of vain debate.—
Or shall we say, thou stoop'st less low
In seeking refuge from the foe,
Against whose heart, in prosperous life,
Thine hand hath ever held the knife?

Such homage hath been paid
By Roman and by Grecian voice,
And there were honour in the choice,
If it were freely made.

Then safely come—in one so low,—
So lost,—we cannot own a foe ;
Though dear experience bid us end,
In thee we ne'er can hail a friend.—
Come, howsoever—but do not
Close in thy heart that germ of pride,
Erewhile, by gifted bard espied,
That “yet imperial hope ;”

Think not that for a fresh rebound,
To raise ambition from the ground,
We yield thee means or scope.

In safety come—but ne'er again
Hold type of independent reign ;

No islet calls thee lord,
We leave thee no confederate band,
No symbol of thy lost command,
To be a dagger in the hand

From which we wrench'd the sword.

XVIII.

Yet, even in yon sequester'd spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot

Than yet thy life has known ;
Conquest, unbought by blood or harm,
That needs nor foreign aid nor arm,
A triumph all thine own.
Such waits thee when thou shalt control
Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,
That marr'd thy prosperous scene :—
Hear this—from no unmoved heart,
Which sighs, comparing what THOU ART
With what thou MIGHT'ST HAVE BEEN

XIX.

Thou, too, whose deeds of fame renew'd
Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
To thine own noble heart must owe
More than the meed she can bestow.
For not a people's just acclaim,
Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
Thy Prince's smiles, thy state's decree,
The ducal rank, the garter'd knee,
Not these such pure delight afford
As that, when hanging up thy sword,
Well mayst thou think, " This honest steel
Was ever drawn for public weal ;
And, such was rightful Heaven's decree,
Ne'er sheathed unless with victory ! "

XX.

Look forth, once more, with soften'd heart,
Ere from the field of fame we part ;
Triumph and Sorrow border near,
And joy oft melts into a tear.
Alas ! what links of love that morn
Has War's rude hand asunder torn !

For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.
Here piled in common slaughter sleep
Those whom affection long shall weep :
Here rests the sire, that ne'er shall strain
His orphans to his heart again ;
The son, whom, on his native shore,
The parent's voice shall bless no more ;
The bridegroom, who has hardly press'd
His blushing consort to his breast ;
The husband, whom through many a year
Long love and mutual faith endear.
Thou canst not name one tender tie,
But here dissolved its relics lie !
O ! when thou see'st some mourner's veil
Shroud her thin form and visage pale,
Or mark'st the Matron's bursting tears
Stream when the stricken drum she hears ;
Or see'st how manlier grief, suppress'd,
Is labouring in a father's breast,—
With no enquiry vain pursue
The cause, but think on Waterloo !

XXI.

Period of honour as of woes,
What bright careers 'twas thine to close !—
Mark'd on thy roll of blood what names
To Britain's memory, and to Fame's,
Laid there their last immortal claims !
Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
Redoubted PICTON'S soul of fire—
Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
All that of PONSONBY could die—

DE LANCEY change Love's bridal-wreath,
 For laurels from the hand of Death—¹
 Saw'st gallant MILLER'S ² failing eye
 Still bent where Albion's banners fly,
 And CAMERON, ³ in the shock of steel,
 Die like the offspring of Lochiel ;
 And generous GORDON, ⁴ 'mid the strife,
 Fall while he watch'd his leader's life.—
 Ah ! though her guardian angel's shield
 Fenced Britain's hero through the field,
 Fate not the less her power made known,
 Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own !

XXII.

Forgive, brave Dead, the imperfect lay !
 Who may your names, your numbers, say ?
 What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
 To each the dear-earn'd praise assign,
 From high-born chiefs of martial fame
 To the poor soldier's lowlier name ?
 Lightly ye rose that dawning day,
 From your cold couch of swamp and clay,
 To fill, before the sun was low,
 The bed that morning cannot know.—

1 [The Poet's friend, Colonel Sir William De Lancey, married the beautiful daughter of Sir James Hall, Bart., in April, 1815, and received his mortal wound on the 18th of June. See Captain B. Hall's affecting narrative in the first series of his "Fragments of Voyages and Travels," vol. ii. p. 369.]

2 [Colonel Miller, of the Guards—son to Sir Wm. Miller, Lord Glenlee. When mortally wounded in the attack on the Bois de Bossu, he desired to see the colours of the regiment once more ere he died. They were waved over his head, and the expiring officer declared himself satisfied.]

3 ["Colonel Cameron, of Fassiefern, so often distinguished in Lord Wellington's despatches from Spain, fell in the action at Quatre Bras (16th June, 1815), while leading the 92nd, or Gordon Highlanders, to charge a body of cavalry, supported by infantry."—*Paul's Letters*, p. 91.]

4 [Colonel the Honourable Sir Alexander Gordon, brother to the Earl of Aberdeen, who has erected a pillar on the spot where he fell by the side of the Duke of Wellington.]



WATERLOO

Then, Wellington! thy piercing eye
This crisis caught of destiny.

The Field of Waterloo, p. 345

From the dramatic by A. Cooper, R.A.

Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
And sacred be the heroes' sleep,
Till time shall cease to run ;
And ne'er beside their noble grave,
May Briton pass and fail to crave
A blessing on the fallen brave
Who fought with Wellington !

XXIII.

Farewell, sad Field ! whose blighted face
Wears desolation's withering trace ;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shatter'd huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong,
That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont
Yet though thy garden's green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shatter'd breeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blacken'd portals torn,
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
Has not such havoc bought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame ?
Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new ;
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remember'd long,
Shall live the towers of Hougomont,
And Field of Waterloo.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

CONCLUSION.

STERN tide of human Time ! that know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
Successive generations to their doom ;
While thy capacious stream has equal room
For the gay bark where Pleasure's streamers sport,
And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port ;—

Stern tide of Time ! through what mysterious change
Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven !
For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange
Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.
And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
Such unexpected bursts of joy and woe,
Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,
Until the awful term when Thou shalt cease to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my Country !—the brave fight
Hast well maintain'd through good report and ill ;
In thy just cause and in thy native might,
And in Heaven's grace and justice constant still ;
Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill
Of half the world against thee stood array'd,
Or when, with better views and freer will,
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid—though slowly rose,
And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
While like the dawn that in the orient glows
On the broad wave its earlier lustre came ;
Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
And Maida's myrtles gleam'd beneath its ray,
Where first the soldier, stung with generous shame,
Rivall'd the heroes of the wat'ry way,
And wash'd in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
Gallant Saint George, the flower of Chivalry,
For thou hast faced, like him, a dragon foe,
And rescued innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down, like him, tyrannic might,
And to the gazing world mayst proudly show
The chosen emblem of thy sainted Knight,
Who quell'd devouring pride, and vindicated right.

Yet 'mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired,
Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down :
'Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known ;
—Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired—
'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

APPENDIX.

Note 1, page 343.—“—————*Charge for France,
France and Napoleon !*”

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles. An eyewitness has given the following account of his demeanour towards the end of the action :—

“It was near seven o'clock ; Bonaparte, who till then had remained upon the ridge of the hill whence he could best behold what passed, contemplated with a stern countenance, the scene of this horrible slaughter. The more that obstacles seemed to multiply, the more his obstinacy seemed to increase. He became indignant at these unforeseen difficulties ; and, far from fearing to push to extremities an army whose confidence in him was boundless, he ceased not to pour down fresh troops, and to give orders to march forward—to charge with the bayonet—to carry by storm. He was repeatedly informed, from different points, that the day went against him, and that the troops seemed to be disordered ; to which he only replied,—‘*En-avant ! En-avant !*’

“One general sent to inform the Emperor that he was in a position which he could not maintain, because it was commanded by a battery, and requested to know, at the same time, in what way he should protect his division from the murderous fire of the English artillery. ‘Let him storm the battery,’ replied Bonaparte, and turned his back on the aide-de-camp who brought the message.’—*Relation de la Bataille de Mont-St-Jean. Par un Témoin Oculaire.* Paris 1815 8vo, p. 51.

Note 2, page 343.—*The fate their leader shunn'd to share.*

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards, at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down indeed to a hollow part of the high road, leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned, which the rising banks on each side rendered secure from all such balls as did not come in a straight line. He witnessed the earlier part of the battle from places yet more remote, particularly from an observatory which had been placed there by the King of the Netherlands, some weeks before, for the purpose of surveying the country.¹ It is not meant to infer from these particulars that Napoleon showed, on that memorable occasion, the least deficiency in personal courage; on the contrary, he evinced the greatest composure and presence of mind during the whole action. But it is no less true that report has erred in ascribing to him any desperate efforts of valour for recovery of the battle; and it is remarkable, that during the whole carnage, none of his suite were either killed or wounded, whereas scarcely one of the Duke of Wellington's personal attendant escaped unhurt.

Note 3, page 346.—*The British shock of levell'd steel.*

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The Imperial Guards, in particular, hardly stood till the British were within thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The Guards never yield—they die." The same author has covered the plateau, or eminence, of St. Jean, which formed the British position, with redoubts and intrenchments which never had an existence. As the narrative, which is in many respects curious,

¹ The mistakes concerning this observatory have been mutual. The English supposed it was erected for the use of Bonaparte; and a French writer affirms it was constructed by the Duke of Wellington.

was written by an eyewitness, he was probably deceived by the appearance of a road and ditch which run along part of the hill. It may be also mentioned, in criticising this work, that the writer mentions the Chateau of Hougomont to have been carried by the French, although it was resolutely and successfully defended during the whole action. The enemy, indeed, possessed themselves of the wood by which it is surrounded, and at length set fire to the house itself; but the British (a detachment of the Guards, under the command of Colonel Macdonnell, and afterwards of Colonel Home) made good the garden, and thus preserved, by their desperate resistance, the post which covered the return of the Duke of Wellington's right flank.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

PHAROS LOQUITUR.*

FAR in the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep ;
A ruddy gem of changeful light,
Bound on the dusky brow of night,
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his timorous sail.

*["On the 30th of July, 1814, Mr. Hamilton,¹ Mr. Erskine,² and Mr. Duff,³ Commissioners, along with Sir Walter Scott, and the writer, visited the Lighthouse ; the Commissioners being then on one of their voyages of Inspection. They breakfasted in the Library, when Sir Walter, at the entreaty of the party, upon inscribing his name in the Album, added these interesting lines."—STEVENSON'S "*Account of the Bell-Rock Lighthouse*," 1824.]

¹ Robert Hamilton, Esq., Advocate, long Sheriff-Depute of Lanarkshire, and afterwards one of the Principal Clerks of Sessions in Scotland.

² Afterwards Lord Kinnedder.

³ Adam Duff, Esq., Sheriff-Depute of the county of Edinburgh.

LINES,¹

ADDRESSED TO

RANALD MACDONALD, ESQ., OF STAFFA.

STAFFA, sprung from high Macdonald,
 Worthy branch of old Clan Ranald !
 Staffa ! king of all kind fellows !
 Well befall thy hills and valleys,
 Lakes and inlets, deeps and shallows—
 Cliffs of darkness, caves of wonder,
 Echoing the Atlantic thunder ;
 Mountains which the grey mist covers,
 Where the Chieftain spirit hovers,
 Pausing while his pinions quiver,
 Stretch'd to quit our land for ever !
 Each kind influence reign above thee !
 Warmer heart, 'twixt this and Staffa
 Beats not, than in heart of Staffa !

¹ [These lines were written in the Album, kept at the Sound of Ulva Inn, in the month of August, 1814.]

FOR A' THAT AN' A' THAT.¹

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE.

THOUGH right be aft put down by strength,
 As mony a day we saw that,
 The true and leilfu' cause at length
 Shall bear the grie for a' that.
 For a' that an' a' that,
 Guns, guillotines, and a' that,
 The Fleur-de-lis, that lost her right,
 Is queen again for a' that !

We'll twine her in a friendly knot
 With England's Rose, and a' that ;
 The Shamrock shall not be forgot,
 For Wellington made bra' that.
 The Thistle, though her leaf be rude,
 Yet faith we'll no misca' that,
 She shelter'd in her solitude
 The Fleur-de-lis, for a' that.

The Austrian Vine, the Prussian Pine
 (For Blucher's sake, hurra that,)
 The Spanish Olive, too, shall join,
 And bloom in peace for a' that.

¹ [Sung at the first meeting of the Pitt Club of Scotland ; and published in the Scots Magazine for July, 1814.]

Stout Russia's Hemp, so surely twined
Around our wreath we'll draw that,
And he that would the cord unbind,
Shall have it for his gra-vat !

Or, if to choke sae puir a sot,
Your pity scorn to thraw that,
The Devil's elbo' be his lot,
Where he may sit and claw that.
In spite of slight, in spite of might,
In spite of brags and a' that,
The lads that battled for the right,
Have won the day and a' that !

There's ae bit spot I had forgot,
America they ca' that !
A coward plot her rats had got
Their father's flag to gnaw that :
Now see it fly top-gallant high,
Atlantic winds shall blaw that,
And Yankee loon, beware your croun,
There's kames in hand to claw that !

For on the land, or on the sea,
Where'er the breezes blaw that,
The British Flag shall bear the grie,
And win the day for a' that !

L I N E S,

ADDRESSED TO MONSIEUR ALEXANDRE,¹ THE
CELEBRATED VENTRILOQUIST.

OF yore, in old England, it was not thought good
To carry two visages under one hood ;
What should folk say to *you* ? who have faces such
 plenty,
That from under one hood, you last night show'd us
 twenty !
Stand forth, arch-deceiver, and tell us in truth,
Are you handsome or ugly, in age or in youth ?
Man, woman, or child—a dog or a mouse ?
Or are you, at once, each live thing in the house ?

¹ [“ *When Monsieur Alexandre, the celebrated ventriloquist, was in Scotland, in 1824, he paid a visit to Abbotsford, where he entertained his distinguished host, and the other visitors, with his unrivalled imitations. Next morning, when he was about to depart, Sir Walter felt a good deal embarrassed, as to the sort of acknowledgment he should offer; but at length, resolving that it would probably be most agreeable to the young foreigner to be paid in professional coin, if in any, he stepped aside for a few minutes, and, on returning, presented him with this epigram. The reader need hardly be reminded, that Sir Walter Scott held the office of Sheriff of the County of Selkirk.*”—Scotch Newspaper, 1830.]

Each live thing, did I ask?—each dead implement, too,
A work-shop in your person,—saw, chisel, and screw !
Above all, are you one individual ? I know
You must be at least Alexandre and Co.
But I think you're a troop—an assemblage—a mob,
And that I, as the Sheriff, should take up the job ;
And instead of rehearsing your wonders in verse,
Must read you the Riot-Act, and bid you disperse.

ABBOTSFORD, 23d April.¹

¹ [The lines, with this date, appeared in the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, of 1824.]

V E R S E S,

COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION, ADAPTED TO
HAYDN'S AIR,

"God Save the Emperor Francis,"

AND SUNG BY A SELECT BAND AFTER THE DINNER
GIVEN BY THE LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH
TO THE

GRAND-DUKE NICHOLAS OF RUSSIA,

AND HIS SUITE, 19TH DECEMBER, 1816.

GOD protect brave ALEXANDER,
Heaven defend the noble Czar,
Mighty Russia's high Commander,
First in Europe's banded war ;
For the realms he did deliver
From the tyrant overthrown,
Thou, of every good the Giver,
Grant him long to bless his own !
Bless him, 'mid his land's disaster,
For her rights who battled brave,
Of the land of foemen master,
Bless him who their wrongs forgave.

O'er his just resentment victor,
Victor over Europe's foes,
Late and long supreme director,
Grant in peace his reign may close.
Hail ! then, hail ! illustrious Stranger !
Welcome to our mountain strand ;
Mutual interests, hopes, and danger,
Link us with thy native land.
Freemen's force, or false beguiling,
Shall that union ne'er divide,
Hand in hand while peace is smiling,
And in battle side by side.¹

¹ [Sir William Arbuthnot, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who had the honour to entertain the Grand-Duke Nicholas of Russia, was a personal friend of Sir Walter Scott's ; and these *Verses*, with their heading, are now given from the newspapers of 1816.]

LINES,¹

WRITTEN FOR MISS SMITH.

WHEN the lone pilgrim views afar
 The shrine that is his guiding star,
 With awe his footsteps print the road
 Which the loved saint of yore has trod.
 As near he draws, and yet more near,
 His dim eye sparkles with a tear ;
 The Gothic fane's unwonted show,
 The choral hymn, the tapers' glow,
 Oppress his soul ; while they delight
 And chasten rapture with affright.
 No longer dare he think his toil
 Can merit aught his patron's smile ;
 Too light appears the distant way,
 The chilly eve, the sultry day—
 All these endured no favour claim,
 But murmuring forth the sainted name,
 He lays his little offering down,
 And only deprecates a frown.

¹ [These lines were first printed in "The Forget-Me-Not, for 1834." They were written for recitation by the distinguished actress, Miss Smith, afterwards Mrs. Bartley, on the night of her benefit at the Edinburgh Theatre, in 1817 ; but reached her too late for her purpose. In a letter which enclosed them, the poet intimated that they were written on the morning of the day on which they were sent—that he thought the idea better than the execution, and forwarded them with the hope of their adding perhaps "a little salt to the pill."]]

We too, who ply the Thespian art,
Oft feel such bodings of the heart,
And, when our utmost powers are strain'd,
Dare hardly hope your favour gain'd.
She, who from sister climes has sought
The ancient land where Wallace fought ;—
Land long renown'd for arms and arts,
And conquering eyes and dauntless hearts ;—
She, as the flutterings *here* avow,
Feels all the pilgrim's terrors *now* ;
Yet sure on Caledonian plain
The stranger never sued in vain.
'Tis yours the hospitable task
To give the applause she dare not ask ;
And they who bid the pilgrim speed,
The pilgrim's blessing be their meed.

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME!¹

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN AULD SPRING.

THE news has flown frae mouth to mouth,
 The North for ance has bang'd the South ;
 The deil a Scotsman's die o' drouth,
 Carle, now the King's come

CHORUS.

Carle, now the King's come !
 Carle, now the King's come !
 Thou shalt dance, and I will sing,
 Carle, now the King's come !

Auld England held him lang and fast ;
 And Ireland had a joyfu' cast ;
 But Scotland's turn is come at last—
 Carle, now the Kings come :

Auld Reekie, in her rokelay gray,
 Thought never to have seen the day ;
 He's been a weary time away—
 But, Carle, now the King's come !

¹ [This imitation of an old Jacobite ditty was written on the appearance, in the Frith of Forth, of the fleet which conveyed his Majesty King George the Fourth to Scotland, in August, 1822, and was published as a broad-side.]

She's skirling frae the Castle-hill ;
 The Carline's voice is grown sae shrill,
 Ye'll hear her at the Canon-mill—

Carle, now the King's come !

"Up, bairns !" she cries, "baith grit and sma',
 And busk ye for the weapon-shaw !—
 Stand by me, and we'll bang them a'—

Carle, now the King's come !

"Come from Newbattle's ancient spires,
 Bauld Lothian, with your knights and squires,
 And match the mettle of your sires—

Carle, now the King's come !

"You're welcome hame, my Montagu !
 Bring in your hand the young Buccleuch ;—
 I'm missing some that I may rue—

Carle, now the King's come ! ¹

"Come, Haddington, the kind and gay,
 You've graced my causeway mony a day ;
 I'll weep the cause if you should stay—

Carle, now the King's come ! ²

"Come, premier Duke, ³ and carry doun
 Frae yonder craig ⁴ his ancient croun ;
 It's had a lang sleep and a soun'—

But, Carle, now the King's come !

¹ [Lord Montagu, uncle and guardian to the young Duke of Buccleuch, placed his Grace's residence of Dalkeith at his Majesty's disposal during his visit to Scotland.]

² [Charles, the tenth Earl of Haddington, died in 1828.]

³ [The Duke of Hamilton, as Earl of Angus, carried the ancient royal crown of Scotland on horseback in King George's procession, from Holyrood to the Castle, Edinburgh, August, 1822.]

⁴ The Castle.

"Come, Athole, from the hill and wood,
Bring down your clansmen like a cloud ;—
Come, Morton, show the Douglas' blood,—
Carle, now the King's come !

"Come, Tweeddale, true as sword to sheath ;
Come, Hopetoun, fear'd on fields of death ;
Come Clerk,¹ and give your hughle breath ;
Carle, now the King's come !

"Come, Wemyss, who modest merit aids ;
Come, Rosebery, from Dalmeny shades ;
Breadalbane, bring your belted plaids ;
Carle, now the King's come !

"Come, stately Niddrie, auld and true,
Girt with the sword that Minden knew ;
We have o'er few such lairds as you—
Carle, now the King's come !

"King Arthur's grown a common crier,
He's heard in Fife and far Cantire,—
'Fie, lads, behold my crest of fire !'²
Carle, now the King's come !

"Saint Abb roars out, 'I see him pass,
Between Tantallon and the Bass !'
Calton, get out your keeking-glass,
Carle, now the King's come !"

¹ Sir George Clerk of Pennycuik, Bart. The Baron of Pennycuik is bound by his tenure, whenever the King comes to Edinburgh, to receive him at the Harestone, (in which the standard of James IV. was erected when his army encamped on the Boroughmuir, before his fatal expedition to England,) now built into the park-wall at the end of Tipperlin Lone, near the Boroughmuir-head ; and, standing thereon, to give three blasts on a horn.

² As seen from the west, the ridge of Arthur's Seat bears a marked resemblance to a lion couchant.

The Carline stopp'd ; and, sure I am,
For very glee had ta'en a dwam,
But Oman ¹ help'd her to a dram.—

· Cogie, now the King's come !

Cogie, now the King's come !

Cogie, now the King's come !

I'se be fou', and ye's be toom, ²

· Cogie, now the King's come !

· ¹ [Mr. Oman, landlord of the Waterloo Hotel.]

Empty.

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME !

PART SECOND.

A HAWICK gill of mountain dew,
Heised up Auld Reekie's heart, I trow,
It minded her of Waterloo—

Carle, now the King's come !

Again I heard her summons swell,
For, sic a dirdum and a yell,
It drown'd Saint Giles's jowing bell—

Carle, now the King's come !

" My trusty Provost, tried and tight,
Stand forward for the Good Town's right,
There's waur than you been made a knight—

Carle, now the King's come !

" My reverend Clergy, look ye say
The best of thanksgivings ye ha'e,
And warstle for a sunny day—

Carle, now the King's come !

¹ [The Lord Provost had the agreeable surprise to hear his health proposed, at the civic banquet given to George IV. in the Parliament-House as Sir William Arbuthnot, Bart.]

"My Doctors, look that you agree,
Cure a' the town without a fee ;
My Lawyers, dinna pike a plea—
Carle, now the King's come !

"Come forth each sturdy Burgher's bairn,
That dints on wood or clanks on airn,
That fires the o'en, or winds the pirn—
Carle, now the King's come !

"Come forward with the Blanket Blue,¹
Your sires were loyal men and true,
As Scotland's foemen oft might rue—
Carle, now the King's come !

"Scots downa loup, and rin and rave,
We're steady folks and something grave,
We'll keep the causeway firm and brave—
Carle, now the King's come !

"Sir Thomas,² thunder from your rock,³
Till Pentland dinnles wi' the shock,
And lace wi' fire my snood o' smoke—
Carle, now the King's come !

¹ [The Blue Blanket is the standard of the incorporated trades of Edinburgh, and is kept by their convener, "at whose appearance therewith," observes Maitland, "'tis said, that not only the artificers of Edinburgh are obliged to repair to it, but all the artificers or craftsmen within Scotland are bound to follow it, and fight under the convener of Edinburgh, as aforesaid." According to an old tradition, this standard was used in the Holy Wars by a body of crusading citizens of Edinburgh, and was the first that was planted on the walls of Jerusalem, when that city was stormed by the Christian army under the famous Godfrey. But the real history of it seem to be this:—James III., a prince who had virtues which the rude age in which he lived could not appreciate, having been detained for nine months in the Castle of Edinburgh by his factious nobles, was relieved by the citizens of Edinburgh, who assaulted the castle and took it by surprise; on which occasion, James presented the citizens with this banner, "with a power to display the same in defence of their King, country, and their own rights."—*Note to this stanza in the "Account of the King's Visit,"* &c. 8vo. 1822.]

² [Sir Thomas Bradford, then Commander of the Forces in Scotland.]

³ Edinburgh Castle.

"Melville, bring out your hands of blue,
A' Louden lads, baith stout and true,
With Elcho, Hope, and Cockburn, too—
Carle, now the King's come!

"And you, who on yon bluidy braes
Compell'd the vanquish'd Despot's praise,
Rank out—rank out—my gallant Greys—²
Carle, now the King's come!

"Cock of the North, my Huntly bra',
Where are you with the Forty-twa?³
Ah! waes my heart that ye're awa'—
Carle, now the King's come!

"But yonder come my canty Celts,
With durk and pistols at their belts,
Thank God, we've still some plaids and kilts—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Lord, how the pibrochs groan and yell!
Macdonnell's⁴ ta'en the field himsell,
Macleod comes branking o'er the fell—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Bend up your bow each Archer spark,
For you're to guard him light and dark;
Faith, lads, for ance ye've hit the mark—
Carle, now the King's come!

¹ [Lord Melville was Colonel of the Mid-Lothian Yeomanry Cavalry: Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Bart., Major; and Robert Cockburn, Esq., and Lord Elcho, were Captains in the same corps, to which Sir Walter Scott had formerly belonged.]

² [The Scots Greys, headed by their gallant Colonel, General Sir James Steuart of Coltness, Bart., were on duty at Edinburgh during the King's visit. Bonaparte's exclamation at Waterloo is well known: "Ces beaux chevaux gris, comme ils travaillent!"]

³ Marquis of Huntly, afterwards Duke of Gordon, Colonel of the 42nd regiment.

⁴ [Colonel Ronaldson Macdonell of Glengarry—he died in January 1828.]

“ Young Errol,¹ take the sword of state,
 The sceptre, Panie-Morarchate ; ²
 Knight Mareschal,³ see ye clear the gate—
 Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Kind cummer, Leith, ye’ve been mis-set,
 But dinna be upon the fret—
 Ye’s e hae the handsel of him yet,
 Carle, now the King’s come !

“ My daughters come with een sae blue,
 Your garlands weave, your blossoms strew :
 He ne’er saw fairer flowers than you—
 Carle, now the King’s come !

“ What shall we do for the propine—
 We used to offer something fine,
 But ne’er a groat’s in pouch of mine—
 Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Deil care—for that I’s e never start,
 We’ll welcome him with Highland heart ;
 Whate’er we have he’s get a part—
 Carle, now the King’s come !

¹ [The Earl of Errol is hereditary Lord High-Constable of Scotland.]

² [In more correct Gaelic orthography, *Banamhorar-Chat*, or the Great Lady, (literally *Female Lord*) of the *Chatte* ; the Celtic title of the Countess of Sutherland. “ Evin unto this day, the countrey of Southerland is yet called Cattey, the inhabitants Catteigh, and the Erle of Southerland, Morweir Cattey, in old Scottish or Irish ; which language the inhabitants of this countrey doe still use.”—GORDON’S *Genealogical History of the Earls of Sutherland*, p. 18.]

It was determined by his Majesty, that the right of carrying the sceptre lay with this noble family : and Lord Francis Leveson Gower, second son of the Countess (now Duchess) of Sutherland, was permitted to act as deputy for his mother in that honourable office. After obtaining his Majesty’s permission to depart for Dunrobin Castle, his place was supplied by the Honourable John M. Stuart, second son of the Earl of Moray.]

³ [The Author’s friend and relation, Sir Alexander Keith, of Dunottar and Ravelstone.]

" I'll show him mason-work this day—
Nane of your bricks of Babel clay,
But towers shall stand till Time's away—
Carle, now the King's come !

" I'll show him wit, I'll show him lair,
And gallant lads and lasses fair,
And what wad kind heart wisl for mair?—
Carle, now the King's come !

" Step out, Sir John,¹ of projects rife,
Come win the thanks of an auld wife,
And bring him health and length of life—
Carle, now the King's come !"

¹ [The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, Bart., author of "The Code of Health and Longevity," &c., &c.,—the well-known patron and projector of national and patriotic plans and improvements innumerable during a lifetime of about fourscore years. 1833.]

THE LORD OF THE ISLES

A POEM.

IN SIX CANTOS.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

I COULD hardly have chosen a subject more popular in Scotland than anything connected with the Bruce's history, unless I had attempted that of Wallace. But I am decidedly of opinion, that a popular, or what is called a *taking* title, though well qualified to ensure the publishers against loss, and clear their shelves of the original impression, is rather apt to be hazardous than otherwise to the reputation of the author. He who attempts a subject of distinguished popularity, has not the privilege of awakening the enthusiasm of his audience; on the contrary, it is already awakened, and glows, it may be, more ardently than that of the author himself. In this case, the warmth of the author is inferior to that of the party whom he addresses, who has, therefore, little chance of being, in Bayes's phrase, "elevated and surprised" by what he has thought of with more enthusiasm than the writer. The sense of this risk, joined to the consciousness of striving against wind and tide, made the task of composing the proposed Poem somewhat heavy and hopeless; but, like the prize-fighter in "As You Like it," I was to wrestle for my reputation, and not neglect any advantage. In a most agreeable pleasure-voyage, which I have tried to commemorate in the Introduction to the new edition of the "Pirate," I visited, in social and friendly company, the coasts and islands of Scotland, and made myself acquainted with the localities of which I meant to treat. But this voyage, which was in every other effect so delightful, was

¹ See a note to the lines superscribed "Pharos loquitur," included in Vol. III. of this Edition; and see also "Fragments of a Tour in the Hebrides," &c., printed in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1812.

in its conclusion saddened by one of those strokes of fate which so often mingle themselves with our pleasures. The accomplished and excellent person who had recommended to me the subject for "*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*," and to whom I proposed to inscribe what I already suspected might be the close of my poetical labours, was unexpectedly removed from the world, which she seemed only to have visited for purposes of kindness and benevolence. It is needless to say how the author's feelings, or the composition of his trifling work, were affected by a circumstance which occasioned so many tears and so much sorrow.¹ True it is, that "*The Lord of the Isles*" was concluded, unwillingly and in haste, under the painful feeling of one who has a task which must be finished, rather than with the ardour of one who endeavours to perform that task well. Although the Poem cannot be said to have made a favourable impression on the public, the sale of fifteen thousand copies enabled the author to retreat from the field with the honours of war.

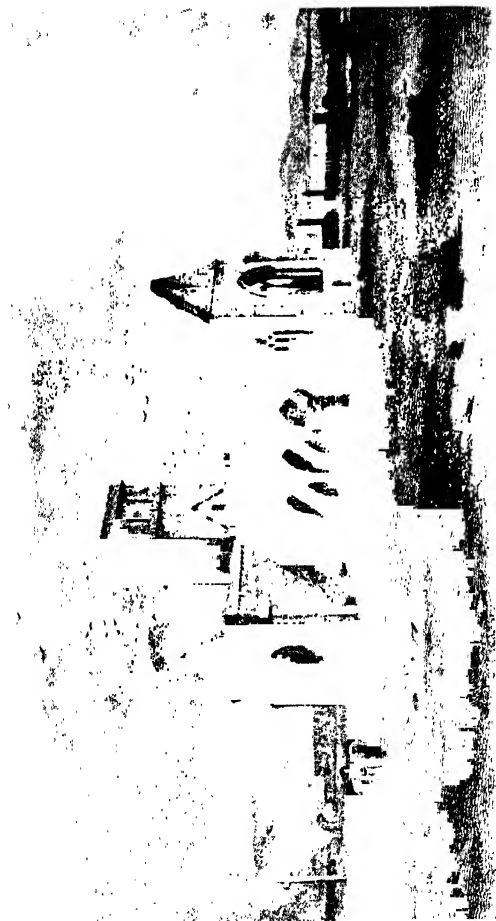
In the meantime, what was necessarily to be considered as a failure, was much reconciled to my feelings by the success attending my attempt in another species of composition. "*Waverley*" had, under strict incognito, taken its flight from the press, just before I set out upon the voyage already mentioned; it had now made its way to popularity, and the success of that work and the volumes which followed, was sufficient to have satisfied a greater appetite for applause than I have at any time possessed.²

I may as well add in this place, that, being much urged by my intimate friend, now unhappily no more, William Erskine, (a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinnedder,) I agreed to write the little romantic tale called the "*Bridal of Triermain*;"³ but it was on the condition, that he should make no serious effort to disown the composition, if report should lay it at his door. As he was more than suspected of a taste for poetry, and as I took care, in several places, to mix something which might resemble (as far as was in my power) my friend's feeling and manner, the train easily caught, and two large editions were sold. A third being called for, Lord Kinnedder became unwilling to aid any longer a deception which was going farther than he expected or desired, and the real author's name was given. Upon another occasion, I sent up another

¹ Harriet, Duchess of Buccleuch, died 24th August, 1814. Sir Walter Scott received the mournful intelligence while visiting the Giant's Causeway, and immediately returned home.

² The first edition of *Waverley* appeared in July, 1814.

³ See Vol. II. of this Edition.



IONA

In Iona's piles,
Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles,
The Lord at the Isles, p. 41
From the drawing by Mrs. C. H. H. H.

of these trifles, which, like school-boy's kites, served to show how the wind of popular taste was setting. The manner was supposed to be that of a rude minstrel, or Scald, in opposition to the "Bridal of Triermain," which was designed to belong rather to the Italian school. This new fugitive piece was called "Harold the Dauntless;"¹ and I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous. It encountered rather an odd fate. My ingenious friend, Mr. James Hogg, had published, about the same time, a work called the "Poetic Mirror," containing imitations of the principal living poets.² There was in it a very good imitation of my own style, which bore such a resemblance to "Harold the Dauntless," that there was no discovering the original from the imitation; and I believe that many who took the trouble of thinking upon the subject, were rather of opinion that my ingenious friend was the true, and not the fictitious Simon Pure. Since this period, which was in the year 1816, the Author has not been an intruder on the public by any poetical work of importance.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

[THE composition of "The Lord of the Isles," as we now have it in the Author's MS., seems to have been begun at Abbotsford, in the Autumn of 1814, and it ended at Edinburgh, the 16th of December. Some part of Canto I. had probably been committed to writing in a rougher form earlier in the year. The original Quarto appeared on the 2nd of January, 1815.

It may be mentioned, that those parts of this poem which were written at Abbotsford, were composed almost all in the presence of Sir Walter Scott's family, and many in that of casual visitors also: the original cottage which he then occupied not affording him any means of retirement. Neither conversation nor music seemed to disturb him.]

¹ See Vol. III. of this Edition. "Harold the Dauntless" was first published in a small 12mo volume, December, 1816.

² Mr. Hogg's "Poetic Mirror" appeared in October, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

*The scene of this poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire ; and, afterwards, in the Islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rochrin on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy; and of Archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose *Metrical History of Robert Bruce*¹ will soon, I trust, appear, under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.*

Abbotsford, 10th December, 1814.

¹ The work alluded to appeared in 1820, under the title of "The Bruce and Wallace." 2 vols. 4to.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO FIRST.

AUTUMN departs—but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,¹
Beneath a shroud of russet dropp'd with gold
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still ;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of silvan music swell,
The deep-toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill ;
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's western
fell.

Autumn departs—from Gala's fields² no more
Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer ;

¹ John, fifteenth Lord Somerville, illustrious for his patriotic devotion to the science of agriculture, resided frequently in his beautiful villa called the Pavilion, situated on the Tweed over against Melrose, and was an intimate friend and almost daily companion of the poet, from whose windows at Abbotsford his lordship's plantations formed a prominent object. Lord S. died in 1819.

² The river Gala, famous in song, flows into the Tweed a few hundred

Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest-home hath hush'd the clanging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of scatter'd
grain.

Deem'st thou these sadden'd scenes have pleasure
still,
Lovest thou through Autumn's fading realms to
stray,
To see the heath-flower wither'd on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
And moralize on mortal joy and pain?—
O ! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel
strain.

No ! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky,
And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
When wild November hath his bugle wound;
Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest
found.

yards below Abbotsford ; but probably the word *Gala* here stands for the poet's neighbour and kinsman, and much attached friend, John Scott, Esq., of Gala.

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day ;
In distant lands, by the rough West reproved,
Still live some relics of the ancient lay.
For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
With such the Seer of Skye the eve beguiles ;
'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
In Harries known, and in Iona's piles,
Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles.

I.

“WAKE, Maid of Lorn !” the Minstrels sung.
Thy rugged halls, Artornish ! rung,¹
And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
As mid the tuneful choir to keep
The diapason of the Deep.
Lull’d were the winds on Inninmore,
And green Loch-Aline’s woodland shore,
As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
In listing to the lovely measure.
And ne’er to symphony more sweet
Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
Since, met from mainland and from isle,
Ross, Arran, Ilay, and Argyle,
Each minstrel’s tributary lay
Paid homage to the festal day.
Dull and dishonour’d were the bard,
Worthless of guerdon and regard,
Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
Or lady’s smiles, his noblest aim,
Who on that morn’s resistless call
Were silent in Artornish hall.

II.

“Wake, Maid of Lorn !” ’twas thus they sung
And yet more proud the descant rung,
“Wake, Maid of Lorn ! high right is ours,
To charm dull sleep from Beauty’s bowers ;
Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so shy
But owns the power of minstrelsy.

¹ See Note 1.

In Lettermore the timid deer
Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear ;
Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark ;¹
To list his notes, the eagle proud
Will poise him on Ben-Cailliach's cloud :
Then let not Maiden's ear disdain
The summons of the minstrel train,
But, while our harps wild music make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake !

III.

" O wake, while Dawn, with dewy shine,
Wakes Nature's charms to vie with thine !
She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
To mate thy melody of voice ;
The dew that on the violet lies
Marks the dark lustre of thine eyes ;
But, Edith, wake, and all we see
Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee ! "—
" She comes not yet," grey Ferrand cried ;
" Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
Those notes prolong'd, that soothing theme,
Which best may mix with Beauty's dream,
And whisper, with their silvery tone,
The hope she loves, yet fears to own."
He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
The strains of flattery and of pride ;
More soft, more low, more tender fell
The lay of love he bade them tell.

¹ The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections. They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played, and even a tune simply whistled has attractions for them. The Dean of the Isles says of Heiskar, a small uninhabited rock, about twelve (Scottish) miles from the Isle of Uist, that an infinite slaughter of seals takes place there.

IV.

“ Wake, Maid of Lorn ! the moments fly,
Which yet that maiden-name allow ;
Wake, Maiden, wake ! the hour is nigh,
When Love shall claim a plighted vow.
By Fear, thy bosom’s fluttering guest,
By Hope, that soon shall fears remove,
We bid thee break the bonds of rest.
And wake thee at the call of Love !

“ Wake, Edith, wake ! in yonder bay
Lies many a galley gaily mann’d,
We hear the merry pibrochs play,
We see the streamers’ silken band.
What Chieftain’s praise these pibrochs swell,
What crest is on these banners wove,
The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell—
The riddle must be read by Love.”

V.

Retired her maiden train among,
Edith of Lorn received the song,
But tamed the minstrel’s pride had been
That had her cold demeanour seen ;
For not upon her cheek awoke
The glow of pride when Flattery spoke,
Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
One sigh responsive to the string.
As vainly had her maidens vied
In skill to deck the princely bride.
Her locks, in dark-brown length array’d,
Cathleen of Ulne, ’twas thine to braid ;

Young Eva with meet reverence drew
On the light foot the silken shoe,
While on the ankle's slender round
Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound,
That, bleach'd Lochryan's depths within,
Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin.
But Einion, of experience old,
Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
In many an artful plait she tied,
To show the form it seem'd to hide,
Till on the floor descending roll'd
Its waves of crimson blent with gold.

VI.

O ! lives there now so cold a maid,
Who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,
In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
And conquest won—the bridal hour—
With every charm that wins the heart,
By Nature given, enhanced by Art,
Could yet the fair reflection view,
In the bright mirror pictured true,
And not one dimple on her cheek
A tell-tale consciousness bespeak ?--
Lives still such maid ?--Fair damsels, say,
For further vouches not my lay,
Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
When Lorn's bright Edith scorn'd to smile.

VII.

But Morag, to whose fostering care
Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
Morag, who saw a mother's aid
By all a daughter's love repaid,

(Strict was that bond—most kind of all—
Inviolatè in Highland hall—)
Grey Morag sate a space apart,
In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
In vain the attendants' fond appeal
To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;
She mark'd her child receive their care,
Cold as the image sculptured fair,
(Form of some sainted patroness,)
Which cloister'd maids combine to dress;
She mark'd—and knew her nursling's heart
In the vain pomp took little part.
Wistful a while she gazed—then press'd
The maiden to her anxious breast
In finish'd loveliness—and led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,¹
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.

VIII.

"Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
To the green Ilay's fertile shore;²
Or mainland turn, where many a tower
Owns thy bold brother's feudal power,
Each on its own dark cape reclined,
And listening to its own wild wind,
From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste,³
To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
Of Connal with his rocks engaging.

¹ See Note 2.² See Note 3.³ See Note 4.

Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
A single brow but thine has frown'd
To sadden this auspicious morn,
That bids the daughter of high Lorn
Impledge her spousal faith to wed
The heir of mighty Somerled ?¹
Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
The fair, the valiant, and the young,
LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty name²
A thousand bards have given to fame,
The mate of monarchs, and allied
On equal terms with England's pride.—
From chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
Who hears the tale, and triumphs not ?
The damsel dons her best attire,
The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
Joy, joy ! each warder's horn hath sung,
Joy, joy ! each matin bell hath rung ;
The hoïy priest says grateful mass,
Loud shouts each hardy galla-glass,
No mountain den holds outcast boor,
Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
But he hath flung his task aside,
And claim'd this morn for holy-tide ;
Yet, empress of this joyful day,
Edith is sad while all are gay."

IX.

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
Resentment check'd the struggling sigh,
Her hurrying hand indignant dried
The burning tears of injured pride—
" Morag, forbear ! or lend thy praise
To swell yon hireling harpers' lays ;

¹ See Note 5.² See Note 6.

Make to yon maids thy boast of power,
That they may waste a wondering hour,
Telling of banners proudly borne,
Of pealing bell and bugle-horn,
Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
Crownlets and gands of rare device.
But thou, experienced as thou art,
Think'st thou with these to cheat the heart,
That, bound in strong affection's chain,
Looks for return and looks in vain ?
No ! even thine Edith's wretched lot
In these brief words—He loves her not !

X.

“ Debate it not—too long I strove
To call his cold observance love,
All blinded by the league that styled
Edith of Lorn,—while yet a child,
She tripp'd the heath by Morag's side,—
The brave Lord Ronald's destined bride.
Ere yet I saw him, while afar
His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war,
Train'd to believe our fates the same,
My bosom throb'd when Ronald's name
Came gracing Fane's heroic tale,
Like perfume on the summer gale.
What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold ;
Who touch'd the harp to heroes' praise,
But his achievements swell'd the lays ?
Even Morag—not a tale of fame
Was hers but closed with Ronald's name.
He came ! and all that had been told
Of his high worth seem'd poor and cold,
Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me !

XI.

“ Since then, what thought had Edith's heart
And gave not plighted love its part !—
And what requital ? cold delay—
Excuse that shunn'd the spousal day —
It dawns, and Ronald is not here !—
Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear, that though he may not scorn
A daughter of the House of Lorn,¹
Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
Again they meet, to part no more ? ”

XII.

“ Hush, daughter, hush ! thy doubts remove,
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Look, where beneath the castle gray
His fleet unmoor from Aros bay !
See'st not each galley's topmost bend,
As on the yards the sails ascend ?
Hiding the dark-blue land they rise,
Like the white clouds on April skies ;
The shouting vassals man the oars,
Behind them sink Mull's mountain shores,
Onward their merry course they keep,
Through whistling breeze and foaming deep.
And mark the headmost, seaward cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her mast,
As if she veil'd its banner'd pride,
To greet afar her prince's bride !
Thy Ronald comes, and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,

¹ See Note 7.

He chides her sloth !"—Fair Edith sigh'd,
Blush'd, sadly smiled, and thus replied :—

XIII.

"Sweet thought, but vain !—No, Morag ! mark,
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
To win its way against the gale.
Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
Have view'd by fits the course she tries ;
Now, though the darkening send comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind
They strive her shivering sail to bind,
Still nearer to the shelves' dread verge
At every tack her course they urge,
As if they fear'd Artornish more
Than adverse winds and breakers' roar."

XIV.

Sooth spoke the Maid.—Amid the tide
The skiff she mark'd lay tossing sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to shore.
Yet on her destined course no more
She gain'd, of forward way,
Than what a minstrel may compare
To the poor meed which peasants share,
Who toil the livelong day ;
And such the risk her pilot braves,
That oft, before she wore,
Her boltsprit kiss'd the broken waves,

Where in white foam the ocean raves
Upon the shelving shore.
Yet, to their destined purpose true,
Undaunted toil'd her hardy crew,
Nor look'd where shelter lay,
Nor for Artornish Castle drew,
Nor steer'd for Aros bay.

XV.

Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
Borne onward by the willing breeze,
Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
Streamer'd with silk, and trick'd with gold,
Mann'd with the noble and the bold
Of Island chivalry.
Around their prows the ocean roars,
And chafes beneath their thousand oars,
Yet bears them on their way:
So chafes the war-horse in his might,
That fieldward bears some valiant knight,
Champs, till both bit and boss are white,
But, foaming, must obey.
On each gay deck they might behold
Lances of steel and crests of gold,
And hauberks with their burnish'd fold,
That shimmer'd fair and free;
And each proud galley, as she pass'd,
To the wild cadence of the blast
Gave wilder minstrelsy.
Full many a shrill triumphant note
Saline and Scallastle bade float
Their misty shores around;
And Morven's echoes answer'd well,
And Duart heard the distant swell
Come down the darksome Sound.

XVI.

So bore they on with mirth and pride,
And if that labouring bark they spied,
 'Twas with such idle eye
As nobles cast on lowly boor,
When, toiling in his task obscure,
 They pass him careless by.
Let them sweep on with heedless eyes !
But, had they known what mighty prize
 In that frail vessel lay,
The famish'd wolf, that prowls the wold,
Had scatheless pass'd the unguarded fold,
Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
 Unchallenged were her way !
And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
With mirth, and pride, and minstrel tone !
But had'st thou known who sail'd so nigh,
Far other glance were in thine eye !
Far other flush were on thy brow,
That, shaded by the bonnet, now
Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer
Of bridegroom when the bride is near !

XVII.

Yes, sweep they on !—We will not leave,
For them that triumph, those who grieve.
 With that armada gay
Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
And bards to cheer the wassail rout,
 With tale, romance, and lay ;
And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
May stupify and stun its smart,
 For one loud busy day.

Yes, sweep they on!--But with that skiff
Abides the minstrel tale,
Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
Labour that strain'd each sinew stiff,
And one sad Maiden's wail.

XVIII.

All day with fruitless strife they toil'd,
With eve the ebbing currents boil'd
More fierce from strait and lake ;
And midway through the channel met
Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
And high their ming'led billows jet,
As spears, that, in the battle set,
Spring upward as they break.
Then, too, the lights of eve were past,
And louder sung the western blast
On rocks of Inninnuore ;
Rent was the sail, and strain'd the mast,
And many a leak was gaping fast,
And the pale steersman stood aghast,
And gave the conflict o'er.

XIX.

'Twas then that One, whose lofty look
Nor labour dull'd nor terror shook,
Thus to the Leader spoke :---
" Brother, how lopest thou to abide
The fury of this wilder'd tide,
Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
Until the day has broke ?
Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
With quivering planks, and groaning keel,
At the last billow's shock ?

Yet how of better counsel tell,
Though here thou see'st poor Isabel
 Half dead with want and fear :
For look on sea, or look on land,
Or yon dark sky, on every hand
 Despair and death are near.
For her alone I grieve—on me
Danger sits light by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt ;
Either to bide the tempest's lour,
Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
Or rush amid their naval power,
With war-cry wake their wassail-hour,
 And die with hand on hilt.”—

XX.

That elder Leader's calm reply
 In steady voice was given,
“ In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven.
Edward, trim thou the shatter'd sail,
The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven ;
So shall we 'scape the western bay,
The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the Castle wall ;
For if a hope of safety rest,
'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
Who seeks for shelter, storm-distress'd,
 Within a chieftain's hall.
If not—it best besceems our worth,
Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
 By noble hands to fall.”

XXI.

The helm, to his strong arm consign'd
Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
And on her alter'd way,
Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
Like greyhound starting from the slip
To seize his flying prey.
Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave ;¹
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave,
It seems as if old Ocean shakes
From his dark brow the lucid flakes
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor light that streaks
Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII.

Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darken'd deep ;—
Artornish, on her frowning steep
'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
And landward far, and far to sea,
Her festal radiance flung.

¹ The phenomenon called by sailors Sea-fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides. At times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness. These phosphoric appearances, concerning the origin of which naturalists are not agreed in opinion, seem to be called into action by the rapid motion of the ship through the water, and are probably owing to the water being saturated with fish-spawn, or other animal substances.

By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd,
 Whose lustre mingled well
 With the pale beam that now appear'd,
 As the cold moon her head uprear'd
 Above the eastern fell.

XXIII.

Thus guided, on their course they bore,
 Until they near'd the mainland shore,
 When frequent on the hollow blast
 Wild shouts of merriment were cast,
 And wind and wave and sea-birds' cry
 With wassail sounds in concert vie,
 Like funeral shrieks with revelry,
 Or like the battle-shout
 By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
 When Triumph, Rage, and Agony,
 Madden the fight and rout.
 Now nearer yet, through mist and storm
 Dimly arose the Castle's form,
 And deepen'd shadow made.
 Far lengthen'd on the main below,
 Where, dancing in reflected glow,
 A hundred torches play'd,
 Spangling the wave with lights as vain
 As pleasures in this vale of pain,
 That dazzle as they fade.

XXIV.

Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee,
 They staid their course in quiet sea.
 Hewn in the rock, a passage there
 Sought the dark fortress by a stair,
 So strait, so high, so steep,
 With peasant's staff one valiant hand
 Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,

'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear and brand,
And plunged them in the deep.¹
His bugle then the helmsman wound ;
Loud answer'd every echo round,
From turret, rock, and bay,
The postern's hinges crash and groan,
And soon the warder's cresset shone
On those rude steps of slippery stone,
To light the upward way.
"Thrice welcome, holy Sire !" he said ;
"Full long the spousal train have staid,
And, vex'd at thy delay,
Fear'd lest, amidst these wildering seas,
The darksome night and freshening breeze
Had driven thy bark astray."—

XXV.

"Warder," the younger stranger said,
"Thine erring guess some mirth had made
In mirthful hour ; but nights like these,
When the rough winds wake western seas,
Brook not of glee. We crave some aid
And needful shelter for this maid
Until the break of day ;
For, to ourselves, the deck's rude plank
Is easy as the mossy bank
That's breathed upon by May.

¹ The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the sea-shore, for the facility of communication which the ocean afforded. Nothing can be more wild than the situations which they chose, and the devices by which the architects endeavoured to defend them. Narrow stairs and arched vaults were the usual mode of access ; and the drawbridge appears at Dunstaffnage, and elsewhere, to have fallen from the gate of the building to the top of such a staircase ; so that any one advancing with hostile purpose, found himself in a state of exposed and precarious elevation, with a gulf between him and the object of his attack.

These fortresses were guarded with equal care. The duty of the watch devolved chiefly upon an officer called the Cockman, who had the charge of challenging all who approached the castle. The very ancient family of Mac-Niel of Barra kept this attendant at their castle about a hundred years ago.

And for our storm-toss'd skiff we seek
 Short shelter in this leeward creek,
 Prompt when the dawn the east shall streak
 Again to bear away."—

Answered the Warder, "In what name
 Assert ye hospitable claim ?

 Whence come, or whither bound ?
 Hath Erin seen your parting sails ?
 Or come ye on Norwegian gales ?
 And seek ye England's fertile vales,
 Or Scotland's mountain ground ?"—

XXVI.

"Warriors—for other title none
 For some brief space we list to own,
 Bound by a vow—warriors are we ;
 In strife by land, and storm by sea,
 We have been known to fame ;
 And these brief words have import dear,
 When sounded in a noble ear,
 To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
 That gives us rightful claim."

Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy ;
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorn'd by the noble and the bold,
 Shunn'd by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea !"—

XXVII.

"Bold stranger, no—'gainst claim like thine,
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
 Though urged in tone that more express'd
 A monarch than a suppliant guest.

Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
On this glad eve is free to all.
Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
'Gainst our ally, great England's Lord,
Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
Or, outlaw'd, dwelt by greenwood tree
With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie,¹
Or aided even the murderous strife,
When Comyn fell beneath the knife
Of that fell homicide The Bruce,²
This night had been a term of truce.—
Ho, vassals ! give these guests your care,
And show the narrow postern stair."

XXVIII.

To land these two bold brethren leapt,
(The weary crew their vessel kept,)
And, lighted by the torches' flare,
That seaward flung their smoky glare,
The younger knight that maiden bare
Half lifeless up the rock ;
On his strong shoulder lean'd her head
And down her long dark tresses shed,
As the wild vine in tendrils spread,
Droops from the mountain oak.
Him follow'd close that elder Lord,
And in his hand a sheathed sword,
Such as few arms could wield ;
But when he boun'd him to such task,
Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
And rend the surest shield.

¹ Sir William Wallace.² See Note 12.

XXIX.

The raised portcullis' arch they pass,
The wicket with its bars of brass,
 The entrance long and low,
Flank'd at each turn by loop-holes strait,
Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
(If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
 To gall an entering foe.
But every jealous post of ward
Was now defenceless and unbarr'd,
 And all the passage free
To one low-brow'd and vaulted room,
Where squire and yeoman, page and groom,
 Plied their loud revelry.

XXX.

And "Rest ye here," the Wardor bade,
"Till to our Lord your suit is said.—
And, comrades, gaze not on the maid,
And on these men who ask our aid,
 As if ye ne'er had seen
A damsel tired of midnight bark,
Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
 And bearing martial mien."
But not for Eachin's reproof
Would page or vassal stand aloof,
 But crowded on to stare,
As men of courtesy untaught,
Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
 From one the foremost there,
His chequer'd plaid, and in its shroud,
To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
 Involved his sister fair.
His brother, as the clansman bent
His sullen brow in discontent,
 Made brief and stern excuse;—

“Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
That decks thy Lord in bridal hall,
’Twere honour’d by her use.”

XXXI.

Proud was his tone, but calm ; his eye
Had that compelling dignity,
His mien that bearing haught and high,
Which common spirits fear ;
Needed ner word nor signal more,
Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o’er ;
Upon each other back they bore,
And gazed like startled deer.
But now appear’d the Seneschal,
Commission’d by his lord to call
The strangers to the Baron’s hall,
Where feasted fair and free
That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
With Edith there his lovely bride,
And her bold brother by her side,
And many a chief, the flower and pride
Of Western land and sea.

Here pause we, gentles, for a space ;
And, if our tale hath won your grace,
Grant us brief patience, and again
We will renew the minstrel strain.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO SECOND.

FILL the bright goblet, spread the festive board !
Summon the gay, the noble, and the fair !
Through the loud hall in joyous concert pour'd,
Let mirth and music sound the dirge of Care !
But ask thou not if Happiness be there,
If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throe,
Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear ;
Lift not the festal mask !—enough to know.
No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe.

II.

With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
With all that olden time deem'd gay,
The Island Chieftain feasted high ;
But there was in his troubled eye
A gloomy fire, and on his brow
Now sudden flush'd, and faded now,
Emotions such as draw their birth
From deeper source than festal mirth.

By fits he paused, and harper's strain
And joster's tale went round in vain,
Or fell but on his idle ear
Like distant sounds which dreamers hear.
Then would he rouse him, and employ
Each art to aid the clamorous joy,
And call for pledge and lay,
And, for brief space, of all the crowd,
As he was loudest of the loud,
Seem gayest of the gay.

III.

Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
Mark'd in brief mirth, or musing long;
The vacant brow, the unlistening ear,
They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
And his fierce starts of sudden glee
Seem'd bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy.
Nor thus alone misjudged the crowd,
Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
And jealous of his honour'd line,
And that keen knight, De Argentine,¹
(From England sent on errand high,
The western league more firm to tie,)
Both deem'd in Ronald's mood to find
A lover's transport-troubled mind.
But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
Pierced deeper through the mystery,
And watch'd, with agony and fear,
Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer.

IV.

She watch'd—yet fear'd to meet his glance,
And he shunn'd hers;—till when by chance

¹ See Note 8.

They met, the point of foeman's lance
Had given a milder pang !
Beneath the intolerable smart
He writhed ;—then sternly mann'd his heart
To play his hard but destined part,
And from the table sprang.
“ Fill me the mighty cup ! ” he said,
“ Erst own'd by royal Somerled :¹
Fill it, till on the studded brim
In burning gold the bubbles swim,
And every gem of varied shine
Glow doubly bright in rosy wine !
To you, brave lord, and brother mine,
Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
The union of Our House with thine,
By this fair bridal-link ! ”—

V.

“ Let it pass round ! ” quoth He of Lorn,
“ And in good time—that winded horn
Must of the Abbot tell ;
She laggard monk is come at last.”
Lord Ronald heard the bugle-blast,
And on the floor at random cast,
The untasted goblet fell.
But when the warder in his car
Tells other news, his blither cheer
Returns like sun of May,
When through a thunder-cloud it beams !—
Lord of two hundred isles, he seems
As glad of brief delay,
As some poor criminal might feel,
When from the gibbet or the wheel
Respited for a day.

¹ See Note 9.

VI.

“ Brother of Iorn,” with hurried voice
He said, “ And you, fair lords, rejoice !
Here, to augment our glee,
Come wandering knight¹ from travel far,
Well proved, they say, in strife of war,
And tempest on the sea.—
Ho ! give them at your board such place
As best their presences may grace,
And bid them welcome free ! ”
With solemn step, and silver wand,
The Seneschal the presence scann’d
Of these strange guests ; and well he knew
How to assign their rank its due ;²
For though the costly furs
That erst had deck’d their caps were torn,
And their gay robes were over-worn,
And soil’d their gilded spurs,
Yet such a high commanding grace
Was in their mien and in their face,
As suited best the princely dais,³
And royal canopy ;
And there he marshall’d them their place,
First of that company.

VII.

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
And angry looks the error chide,
That gave to guests unnamed, unknown,
A place so near their prince’s throne ;
But Owen Erraught said,

¹ The Sewer, to whom rather than the Seneschal, the office of arranging the guests of an island chief appertained, was an officer of importance in the family of a Hebridean chief.

² *Dais*—the great hall-table—elevated a step or two above the rest of the room.

"For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bower and hall
 Has been my honour'd trade.
 Worship and birth to me are known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furr'd robe or broider'd zone;
 And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three strangers oft have sate
 In higher place than now."—

VIII.

"I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
 "Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell;—
 Mark'd ye the younger stranger's eye,
 My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
 How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the noble rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,
 Because the owner might not brook
 On any save his peers to look?
 And yet it moves me more,
 That steady, calm, majestic brow,
 With which the elder chief even now
 Scann'd the gay presence o'er,
 Like being of superior kind,
 In whose high-toned impartial mind
 Degrees of mortal rank and state
 Seem objects of indifferent weight.
 The lady too—though closely tied
 The mantle veil both face and eye,
 Her motions' grace it could not hide,
 Nor could her form's fair symmetry."



EDITH OF LORN

O! lives there now so cold a maid, who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,
Could yet the fair reflection view, in the bright mirror pictured true,
And not one dimple on her cheek a tell-tale consciousness bespeak.

*The Lord of the Isles, p. 15**

From the drawing by Wat. Maclachlan, R.A.

IX.

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Lour'd on the haughty front of Lorn.
From underneath his brows of pride,
The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
And whisper'd closely what the ear
Of Argentine alone might hear ;
Then question'd, high and brief,
If, in their voyage, aught they knew
Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief ?¹
And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harbour'd still by Ulster's shore,
Or launch'd their galleys on the main,
To vex their native land again ?

X.

That younger stranger, fierce and high,
At once confronts the Chieftain's eye
With look of equal scorn ;—
“ Of rebels have we nought to show ;
But if of Royal Bruce thou'dst know,
I warn thee he has sworn,
Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
His banner Scottish winds shall blow,
Despite each mean or mighty foe,
From England's every bill and bow,
To Allaster of Lorn.”
Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
But Ronald quench'd the rising fire ;
“ Brother, it better suits the time
To chase the night with Ferrand's ryme,

¹ See Note 10.

Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine, the jars
That flow from these unhappy wars."—

"Content," said Lorn; and spoke apart
With Ferrand, master of his art,

Then whisper'd Argentine,—

"The lay I named will carry smart
To these bold strangers' haughty heart,

If right this guess of mine."

He ceased, and it was silence all,
Until the minstrel waked the hall.

XI.

*The Brooch of Lorn.*¹

"Whence the brooch of burning gold,
That clasps the Chieftain's mantle-fold,
Wrought and chased with rare device,
Studded fair with gems of price,²
On the varied tartans beaming,
As, through night's pale rainbow gleaming,
Fainter now, now seen afar,
Fitful shines the northern star?
"Gem! ne'er wrought on highland mountain,
Did the fairy of the fountain,
Or the mermaid of the wave,
Frame thee in some coral cave?
Did in Iceland's darksome mine
Dwarf's swart hands thy metal twine?
Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou here,
From England's love, or France's fear?"

¹ See Note 11.

² Great art and expense was bestowed upon the *fibula*, or brooch, which secured the plaid, when the wearer was a person of importance. Martin mentions having seen a silver brooch of a hundred marks value.

XII.

Song continued.

“No!—thy splendours nothing tell
Foreign art or faëry spell.
Moulded thou for monarch's use,
By the overweening Bruce,
When the royal robe he tied
O'er a heart of wrath and pride;
Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
By the victor hand of Lorn!

“When the gem was won and lost,
Widely was the war-cry toss'd!
Rung aloud Bendorish fell,
Answer'd Douchart's sounding dell,
Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
When the homicide, o'ercome,
Hardly 'scaped with scathe and scorn,
Left the pledge with conquering Lorn!

XIII.

Song concluded.

“Vain was then the Douglas brand,¹
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work;²
Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye,³

¹ The gallant Sir James, called the Good Lord Douglas, the most faithful and valiant of Bruce's adherents, was wounded at the battle of Dalry. Sir Nigel, or Niel Campbell, was also in that unfortunate skirmish. He married Marjorie, sister to Robert Bruce, and was among his most faithful followers.

² See Note 12.

³ These knights are enumerated by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents, who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven. There were more than one of the noble family of Hay engaged in Bruce's

When this brooch, triumphant borne,
Beam'd upon the breast of Lorn.

“ Farthest fled its former Lord,
Left his men to brand and cord,
Bloody brand of Highland steel,
English gibbet, axe, and wheel.
Let him fly from coast to coast,
Dogg'd by Comyn's vengeful ghost,
While his spoils, in triumph worn,
Long shall grace victorious Lorn ! ”

XIV.

As glares the tiger on his foes,
Heim'd in by hunters, spears, and bows,
And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
Selects the object of his spring,—
Now on the bard, now on his Lord,
So Edward glared and grasp'd his sword—
But stern his brother spoke,—“ Be still.
What ! art thou yet so wild of will,
After high deeds and sufferings long,
To chafe thee for a menial's song ?—
Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strains,
To praise the hand that pays thy pains ;¹
Yet something might thy song have told
Of Lorn's three vassals, true and bold,
Who rent their Lord from Bruce's hold;

cause ; but the principal was Gilbert de la Haye, Lord of Errol, a staunch adherent to King Robert's interest, and whom he rewarded by creating him hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland. He was slain at the battle of Halidoun-hill. Hugh de la Haye, his brother, was made prisoner at the battle of Methven.

¹ The character of the Highland bards, however high in an earlier period of society, seems soon to have degenerated. The Irish affirm, that in their kindred tribes severe laws became necessary to restrain their avarice. In the Highlands they seem gradually to have sunk into contempt, as well as the orators, or men of speech, with whose office that of family poet was often united.

As underneath his knee he lay,
And died to save him in the fray.
I've heard the Bruce's cloak and clasp
Was clench'd within their dying grasp,
What time a hundred foemen more
Rush'd in and back the victor bore,
Long after Lorn had left the strife.
Full glad to 'scape with limb and life.—
Enough of this—And, Minstrel, hold,
As minstrel-hire, this chain of gold.
For future lays a fair excuse,
To speak more nobly of the Bruce."

XV.

"Now, by Columba's shrine, I swear,
And every saint that's buried there,
'Tis he himself!" Lorn sternly cries,
"And for my kinsman's death he dies."
As loudly Ronald calls—"Forbear!
Not in my sight while brand I wear,
O'ermatch'd by odds, shall warrior fall,
Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
This ancient fortress of my race
Shall be misfortune's resting-place,
Shelter and shield of the distress'd,
No slaughter-house for shipwreck'd guest."—
"Talk not to me," fierce Lorn replied,
"Of odds or match!—when Comyn died,
Three daggers clash'd within his side!
Talk not to me of sheltering hall.
The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
On God's own altar stream'd his blood,
While o'er my prostrate kinsman stood
The ruthless murderer—e'en as now—
With armed hand and scornful brow!—

Up, all who love me ! blow on blow !
And lay the outlaw'd felons low ! ”

XVI.

Then up sprang many a mainland Lord,
Obedient to their Chieftain's word.
Barcaldine's arm is high in air,
And Kinloch-Alline's blade is bare,
Black Murthok's dirk has left its sheath,
And clench'd is Dermid's hand of death.
Their mutter'd threats of vengeance swell
Into a wild and warlike yell ;
Onward they press with weapons high,
The affrighted females shriek and fly,
And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
Had darken'd ere its noon of day,
But every chief of birth and fame,
That from the Isles of Ocean came,
At Ronald's side that hour withstood
Fierce Lorn's relentless thirst for blood.

XVII.

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
Mac-Niel, wild Bara's ancient thane,
Duart, of bold Clan Gillian's strain,
Fergus, of Canaan's castled bay,
Mac-Dufflith, Lord of Colonsay,
Soon as they saw the broadswords glance,
With ready weapons rose at once,
More prompt, that many an ancient feud,
Full oft suppress'd, full oft renew'd,
Glow'd twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
And many a lord of ocean's isle.

Wild was the scene—each sword was bare,
Back stream'd each chieftain's shaggy hair,
In gloomy opposition set,
Eyes, hands, and brandish'd weapons met;
Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
Flashed to the torches many a sword;
And soon those bridal lights may shine
On purple blood for rosy wine.

XVIII.

While thus for blows and death prepared,
Each heart was up, each weapon bared,
Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
Still revered hospitable laws.
All menaced violence, but alike
Reluctant each the first to strike,
(For aye accursed in minstrel line
Is he who brawls 'mid song and wine,)
And, match'd in numbers and in might,
Doubtful and desperate seem'd the fight.
Thus threat and murmur died away,
Till on the crowded hall their lay
Such silence, as the deadly still.
Ere bursts the thunder on the hill.
With blade advanced, each Chieftain bold
Show'd like the Swordsman's form of old,
As wanting still the torch of life,
To wake the marble into strife.

XIX.

That awful pause the stranger maid,
And Edith, seized to pray for aid.
As to De Argentine she clung,
Away her veil the stranger flung,

And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
Fast stream'd her eyes, wide flow'd her hair.
"O thou, of knighthood once the flower,
Sure refuge in distressful hour,
Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
For our dear faith, and oft hast sought
Renown in knightly exercise,
When this poor hand has dealt the prize,
Say, can thy soul of honour brook
On the unequal strife to look,
When, butcher'd thus in peaceful hall,
Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall!"
To Argentine she turn'd her word,
But her eye sought the Island Lord.
A flush like evening's setting flame
Glow'd on his cheek; his hardy frame,
As with a brief convulsion, shook:
With hurried voice and eager look,—
"Fear not," he said, "my Isabel.
What said I—Edith!—all is well—
Nay, fear not—I will well provide
The safety of my lovely bride—
My bride?"—but there the accents clung
In tremor to his faltering tongue.

XX.

Now rose De Argentine, to claim
The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
(Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
His care their safety to provide;
For knight more true in thought and deed
Than Argentine ne'er spurr'd a steed)—
And Ronald, who his meaning guess'd,
Seem'd half to sanction the request.

This purpose fiery Torquil broke ;—
“ Somewhat we’ve heard of England’s yoke,”
He said, “ and, in our islands, Fame
Hath whisper’d of a lawful claim,
That calls the Bruce fair Scotland’s Lord,
Though dispossess’d by foreign sword.
This craves reflection—but though right
And just the charge of England’s Knight,
Let England’s crown her rebels seize
Where she has power ;—in towers like these,
’Midst Scottish Chieftains summon’d here
To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
Be sure, with no consent of mine,
Shall either Lorn or Argentine
With chains or violence, in our sight,
Oppress a brave and banish’d Knight.”

XXI.

Then waked the wild debate again,
With brawling threat and clamour vain.
Vassals and menials, thronging in,
Lent their brute rage to swell the din ;
When, far and wide, a bugle-clang
From the dark ocean upward rang.
“ The Abbot comes ! ” they cry at once,
“ The holy man, whose favour’d glance
Hath sainted visions known ;
Angels have met him on the way,
Beside the blessed martyrs’ bay,
And by Columba’s stone.
His monks have heard their hymnings high
Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
To cheer his penance lone,
When at each cross, on girth and wold,
(Their number thrice a hundred-fold,)

His prayer he made, his beads he told
 With Aves many a one—
 He comes our feuds to reconcile,
 A sainted man from sainted isle ;
 We will his holy doom abide,
 The Abbot shall our strife decide."

XXII.

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
 When though the wide revolving door
 The black-stoled brethren wind ;
 Twelve sandall'd monks, who relics bore,
 With many a torch-bearer before,
 And many a cross behind.
 Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
 And dagger bright and flashing brand
 Dropp'd swiftly at the sight ;
 They vanish'd from the Churchman's eye,
 As shooting stars, that glance and die,
 Dart from the vault of night.

XXIII.

The Abbot on the threshold stood,
 And in his hand the holy rood ;
 Back on his shoulders flow'd his hood,
 The torch's glaring ray
 Show'd, in its red and flashing light,
 His wither'd cheek and amice white,
 His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
 His tresses scant and gray.
 " Fair Lords," he said, " our Lady's love,
 And peace be with you from above,
 And Benedicite !—
 —But what means this ? no peace is here !—
 Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal cheer ?
 Or are these naked brands

A seemly show for Churchman's sight,
When he comes summon'd to unite
Betrothed hearts and hands ? ”

XXIV.

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
Proud Lorn first answer'd the appeal ;—
“Thou comest, O holy Man,
True sons of blessed church to greet.
But little deeming here to meet
A wretch, beneath the ban
Of Pope and Church, for murder done
Even on the sacred altar-stone !—
Well mayst thou wonder we should know
Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,
Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,
With excommunicated Bruce !
Yet well I grant, to end debate,
Thy sainted voice decide his fate.”

XXV.

Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
And knighthood's oath and honour's laws ;
And Isabel, on bended knee,
Brought pray'rs and tears to back the plea ;
And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy pray'd.
“Hence,” he exclaimed, “degenerate maid !
Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour,¹

¹ It was anciently customary in the Highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband. Nay, in some cases the complaisance was stretched so far, that she remained there upon trial for a twelvemonth ; and the bridegroom, even after this period of cohabitation, retained an option of refusing to fulfil his engagement. It is said that a desperate feud ensued between the clans of Mac-Donald of Sleate and Mac-Leod, owing to the former chief having availed himself of this license to send back to Dunvegan a sister or daughter of the latter. Mac-Leod, resenting the indignity, observed, that

Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
 His careless, cold approach to wait?—
 But the bold Lord of Cumberland,
 The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand;
 His it shall be—Nay, no reply!
 Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry.”
 With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
 Yet nought relax'd his brow of awe.

XXVI.

Then Argentine, in England's name,
 So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
 He waked a spark, that, long suppress'd,
 Had smouldered in Lord Ronald's breast;
 And now, as from the flint the fire,
 Flash'd forth at once his generous ire.
 “Enough of noble blood,” he said,
 “By English Edward had been shed,
 Since matchless Wallace first had been
 In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green,¹
 And done to death by felon hand,
 For guarding well his father's land.
 Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
 And valiant Seton—where are they?
 Where Somerville, the kind and free?
 And Fraser, flower of chivalry?²
 Have they not been on gibbet bound,
 Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,
 And hold we here a cold debate,
 To yield more victims to their fate?
 What! can the English Leopard's mood
 Never be gorged with northern blood?

since there was no wedding bonfire, there should be one to solemnize the divorce. Accordingly, he burned and laid waste the territories of MacDonald, who retaliated, and a deadly feud, with all its accompaniments, took place in form.

¹ See Note 13.

² See Note 14.

Was not the life of Athole shed,
To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed ?¹
And must his word, till dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay !—²
Thou frown'st, De Argentine,—My gage
Is prompt to prove the strife I wage.”—

XXVII.

“ Nor deem,” said stout Dunvegan's knight,
“ That thou shalt brave alone the fight !
By saints of isle and mainland both,
By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,) ³
Let Rome and England do their worst,
Howe'er attainted or accursed,
If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
Once more to brave a battle-plain,
If Douglas couch again his lance,
Or Randolph dare another chance,
Old 'Torquil will not be to lack
With twice a thousand at his back.—
Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
Good Abbot ! for thou know'st of old,
Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
Snack of the wild Norwegian still ;

¹ John de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed, with circumstances of great barbarity, being first half strangled, then let down from the gallows while yet alive, barbarously dismembered, and his body burnt. It may surprise the reader to learn, that this was a mitigated punishment; for in respect that his mother was a granddaughter of King John, by his natural son Richard, he was not drawn on a sledge to execution, “ that point was forgiven,” and he made the passage on horseback.

² This alludes to a passage in Barbour, singularly expressive of the vindictive spirit of Edward I. The prisoners taken at the Castle of Kildrummie had surrendered upon condition that they should be at King Edward's disposal. “ But his will,” says Barbour, “ was always evil towards Scottishmen.” The news of the surrender of Kildrummie arrived when he was in his mortal sickness at Burgh-upon-Sands.

³ The MacLeods, and most other distinguished Hebridean families, were of Scandinavian extraction, and some were late or imperfect converts to Christianity. The family names of Torquil, Thormod, &c., are all Norwegian.

Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
For England's wealth, or Rome's applause."

XXVIII.

The Abbot seem'd with eye severe
The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear ;
Then on King Robert turn'd the Monk,
But twice his courage came and sunk,
Confronted with the hero's look ;
Twice fell his eye, his accents shook ;
At length, resolved in tone and brow,
Sternly he question'd him--" And thou,
Unhappy ! what hast thou to plead,
Why I denounce not on thy deed
That awful doom which canons tell
Shuts paradise, and opens hell ;
Anathema of power so dread,
It blends the living with the dead,
Bids each good angel soar away,
And every ill one claim his prey ;
Expels thee from the church's care,
And deafens Heaven against thy prayer ;
Arms every hand against thy life,
Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant,
With meanest alms relieves thy want ;
Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead,
Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
Rends Honour's scutcheon from thy hearse,
Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
And spurns thy corpse from hallow'd ground,
Flung like vile carrion to the hound ;
Such is the dire and desperate doom
For sacrilege, decreed by Rome ;
And such the well-deserved meed
Of thine unhallow'd, ruthless deed."—

XXIX.

“ Abbot ! ” the Bruce replied, “ thy charge
It beets not to dispute at large.
This much, however, I bid thee know,
No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
For Comyn died his country’s foe.
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
Fulfill’d my soon-repent’d deed,
Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
The dire anathema has rung.
I only blame mine own wild ire,
By Scotland’s wrongs incensed to fire.
Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And hears a penitent’s appeal
From papal carse and prelate’s zeal
My first and dearest task achieved,
Fair Scotland from her thrall relieved,
Shall many a priest in cope and stole
Say requiem for Red Comyn’s soul,
While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and lance.¹
But, while content the church should know
My conscience owns the debt I owe,
Unto De Argentine and Lorn
The name of traitor I return,
Bid them defiance stern and high,
And give them in their throats the lie !
These brief words spoke, I speak no more.
Do what thou wilt ; my shrift is o’er.”

¹ Bruce uniformly professed, and probably felt, compunction for having violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn ; and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, he requested James Lord Douglas to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre.

XXX.

Like man by prodigy amazed,
 Upon the King the Abbot gazed;
 Then o'er his pallid features glance,
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance.
 His breathing came more thick and fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering light;
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flush'd is his brow, through every vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguish'd accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spok.

XXXI.

“De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head,¹
 And give thee as an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy gore;—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, heaven-controll'd,
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repress'd.²
 It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains!—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe:

¹ SO SOON as the notice of Comyn's slaughter reached Rome, Bruce and his adherents were excommunicated. It was published first by the Archbishop of York, and renewed at different times, particularly by Lambyrton, Bishop of St. Andrews, in 1308; but it does not appear to have answered the purpose which the English monarch expected. Indeed, for reasons which it may be difficult to trace, the thunders of Rome descended upon the Scottish mountains with less effect than in more fertile countries. Probably the comparative poverty of the benefices occasioned that fewer foreign clergy settled in Scotland; and the interest of the native churchmen were linked with that of their country. Many of the Scottish prelates, Lambyrton the primate particularly, declared for Bruce, while he was yet under the ban of the church, although he afterwards again changed sides.

² See Note 15.

O'er-master'd yet by high behest,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd ! "
He spoke, and o'er the astonish'd throng
Was silence, awful, deep, and long.

XXXII.

Again that light has fired his eye,
Again his form swells bold and high,
The broken voice of age is gone,
'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone :—
" Thrice vanquish'd on the battle-plain,
Thy followers slaughter'd, fled, or ta'en,
A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exil'd,¹
Disown'd, deserted, and distress'd,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd !
Bless'd in the hall and in the field,
Under the mantle as the shield.
Avenger of thy country's shame,
Restorer of her injured fame,
Bless'd in thy sceptre and thy sword,
De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful Lord,
Bless'd in thy deeds and in thy fame,
What lengthen'd honours wait thy name !
In distant ages, sire to son
Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
And teach his infants, in the use
Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce.
Go, then, triumphant ! sweep along
Thy course, the theme of many a song !
The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
Hath bless'd thee, and thou shalt be bless'd !—
Enough—my short-lived strength decays,
And sinks the momentary blaze.—

¹ See Note 16.

Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
Not here must nuptial vow be spoke ;
Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
Our task discharged.—Unmoor, unmoor !"—
His priests received the exhausted Monk,
As breathless in their arms he sunk.
Punctual his orders to obey,
The train refused all longer stay,
Embarked, raised sail, and bore away.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO THIRD.

HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er thy startled head
Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has roll'd,
How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold ?
The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
The wall-flower waves not on the ruin'd hold,
Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning
hill !

II.

Artornish ! such a silence sunk
Upon thy halls, when that grey Monk
His prophet-speech had spoke ;
And his obedient brethren's sail
Was stretch'd to meet the southern gale
Before a whisper woke.

"My horse, my mantle, and my train !
 Let none who honours Lorn remain !"—
 Courteous, but stern, a bold request
 To Bruce De Argentine express'd.
 "Lord Earl," he said,—“I cannot chuse
 But yield such title to the Bruce,
 Though name and earldom both are gone,
 Since he braced rebel's armour on—
 But Earl or Serf—rude phrase was thine
 Of late, and launch'd at Argentine ;
 Such as compels me to demand
 Redress of honour at thy hand.
 We need not to each other tell,
 That both can wield their weapons well ;
 Then do me but the soldier grace,
 This glove upon thy helm to place
 Where we may meet in fight ;
 And I will say, as still I've said,
 Though by ambition far misled,
 Thou art a noble knight.”—

VI.

"And I," the princely Bruce replied,
 "Might term it stain on knighthood's pride,
 That the bright sword of Argentine
 Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine ;
 But, for your brave request,
 Be sure the honour'd pledge you gave
 In every battle-field shall wave
 Upon my helmet-crest ;
 Believe, that if my hasty tongue
 Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
 It shall be well redress'd.
 Not dearer to my soul was glove,
 Bestow'd in youth by lady's love,
 Than this which thou hast given !

Thus, then, my noble foe I greet ;
Health and high fortune till we meet,
And then—what pleases Heaven.”

VII.

Thus parted they—for now, with sound
Like waves roll'd back from rocky ground,
The friends of Lorn retire ;
Each mainland chieftain, with his train,
Draws to his mountain towers again,
Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain,
And mortal hopes expire.
But through the castle double guard,
By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
Wicket and gate were trebly barr'd,
By beam and bolt and chain ;
Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
He pray'd excuse for mirth broke short,
And bade them in Arternish fort
In confidence remain.
Now torch and menial tendance led
Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
And beads were told, and aves said,
And soon they sunk away
Into such sleep, as wont to shed
Oblivion on the weary head,
After a toilsome day.

VIII.

But soon uprous'd, the Monarch cried
To Edward slumbering by his side,
“ Awake, or sleep for aye
Even now there jarr'd a secret door—
A taper-light gleams on the floor—
Up, Edward, up, I say !

Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
Nay, strike not ! 'tis our noble Host."

Advancing then his taper's flame,
Ronald stept forth, and with him came
Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
To Bruce in sign of fealty,

And proffer'd him his sword,
And hail'd him in a monarch's style,
As king of mainland and of isle,
And Scotland's rightful lord.

"And O," said Ronald, "Own'd of Heaven !

Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
Who rebel falchion drew,

Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
Even while I strove against thy claim,
Paid homage just and true ?"—

"Alas ! dear youth, the unhappy time,"
Answer'd the Bruce, "must bear the crime,

Since, guiltier far than you,
Even I"—he paused ; for Falkirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.¹
The Chieftain to his breast he press'd,
And in a sigh conceal'd the rest.

IX.

They proffer'd aid, by arms and might,
To repossess him in his right ;
But well their counsels must be weigh'd,
Ere banners raised and muster made,
For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
Bound many chiefs in southern leagues.
In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
To his new vassals frankly told.

¹ See Note 17.

“The winter worn in exile o’er,
I long’d for Carrick’s kindred shore.
I thought upon my native Ayr,
And long’d to see the burly fare
That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
Now echoes through my father’s hall.
But first my course to Arran led,
Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
And on the sea, by tempest toss’d,
Our barks dispersed, our purpose cross’d,
Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
Far from her destined course had run,
When that wise will, which masters ours,
Compell’d us to your friendly towers.”

X.

Then Torquil spoke : “The time craves speed !
We must not linger in our deed,
But instant pray our Sovereign Liege,
To shun the perils of a siege
The vengeful Lorn, with all his powers,
Lies but too near Artornish towers,
And England’s light-armed vessels ride,
Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
And sweep each strait, and guard each shore.
Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
Secret and safe my Liege must lie
In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide.”—
“Not so, brave Chieftain,” Ronald cried ;
“Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
And raise in arms the men of Slate,
Whilst thou, renown’d where chiefs debate,

Shalt sway their souls by council sage,
 And awe them by thy locks of age.”—
 —“And if my words in weight shall fail,
 This ponderous sword shall turn the scale.”—

XI.

“The scheme,” said Bruce, “contents me well;
 Meantime, ’twere best that Isabel,
 For safety, with my bark and crew,
 Again to friendly Erin drew.
 There Edward, too, shall with her wend,
 In need to cheer her and defend,
 And muster up each scatter’d friend.”—
 Here seem’d it as Lord Ronald’s ear
 Would other counsel gladlier hear;
 But, all achieved as soon as plann’d,
 Both barks, in secret arm’d and man’d,
 From out the haven bore;
 On different voyage forth they ply,
 This for the coast of winged Skye,
 And that for Erin’s shore.

XII.

With Bruce and Ronald bides the tale.
 To favouring winds they gave the sail,
 Till Mull’s dark headlands scarce they knew,
 And Arduamurchan’s hills were blue.
 But then the squalls blew close and hard,
 And, fain to strike the galley’s yard,
 And take them to the oar,
 With these rude seas, in weary plight,
 They strove the livelong day and night,
 Nor till the dawning had a sight
 Of Skye’s romantic shore.

Where Coolin stoops him to the west,
They saw upon his shiver'd crest
The Sun's arising gleam ;
But such the labour and delay,
Ere they were moor'd in Scavigh bay,
(For calmer heaven compell'd to stay,)

He shot a western beam.

Then Ronald said, " If true mine eye,
These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnardill and Dunskey ;¹

No human foot comes here.

And, since these adverse breezes blow,
If my good Liege love hunter's bow,
What hinders that on land we go,

And strike a mountain-deer ?

Allan, my page, shall with us wend ;
A bow full deftly can he bend,
And, if we meet a herd may send

A shaft shall mend our cheer."

Then each took bow and bolts in hand,
Their row-boat launch'd and leapt to land,
And left their skiff and train,
Where a wild stream, with headlong shock,
Came brawling down its bed of rock,
To mingle with the main.

XIII.

A while their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain-deer,
Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,
" St. Mary ! what a scene is here !

¹ The extraordinary piece of scenery which I have here attempted to describe, is, I think, unparalleled in any part of Scotland, at least in any which I have happened to visit. It lies just upon the frontier of the Laird of MacLeod's country, which is thereabouts divided from the estate of Mr. Maccallister of Strath-Aird, called Strathnardill by the Dean of the Isles.

I've traversed many a mountain-strand,
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led ;
Thus, many a waste I've wander'd o'er,
Clombe many a crag, cross'd many a moor,
But, by my halidome,
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press,
Where'er I happ'd to roam."

XIV.

No marvel thus the Monarch spake ;
For rarely human eye has known
A scene so stern as that dread lake,
With its dark ledge of barren stone.
Seems that primeval earthquake's sway
Hath rent a strange and shatter'd way
Through the rude bosom of the hill,
And that each naked precipice,
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
Tells of the outrage still.
The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of Nature's genial glow ;
On high Benmore green mosses grow,
And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
And copse on Cruchan-Ben ;
But here,—above, around, below,
On mountain or in glen,
Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
Nor aught of vegetative power,
The weary eye may ken.
For all is rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
As if were here denied

The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
That clothe with many a varied hue
The bleakest mountain-side.¹

XV.

And wilder, forward as they wound,
Were the proud cliffs and lake profound.
Huge terraces of granite black
Afforded rude and cumber'd track ;
 For from the mountain hear,
Hurl'd headlong in some night of fear,
When yell'd the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o'er ;
And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
In Nature's rage at random thrown,
Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base.
The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
And round the skirts their mantle furl'd,
Or on the sable waters curl'd,
Or on the eddy breezes whirl'd,
 Dispersed in middle air.
And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
And when return the sun's glad beams,
Whiten'd with foam a thousand streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown.

¹ In the opinion of J. M. W. Turner, "No words could have given a truer picture of this, one of the wildest of Nature's landscapes." Turner adds, however, that he dissents in one particular; but for *one or two* tufts of grass he must have broken his neck, having slipped when trying to attain the best position for making a drawing of this view.

XVI.

"This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear
Are precipices sharp and sheer,
Yielding no track for goat or deer,

Save the black shelves we tread,
How term you its dark waves? and how
Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,

And yonder peak of dread,
That to the evening sun uplifts
The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts,
Which seam its shiver'd head?"

"Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.

But bards, familiar in our isles
Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
Full oft their careless humours please
By sportive names from scenes like these.

I would old Torquil were to show
His maidens with their breasts of snow,
Or that my noble Liege were nigh
To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
(The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
Or that your eye could see the mood
Of Corryvreckin's whirlpool rude,
When dons the Hag her whiten'd hood—
'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names."

XVII.

Answer'd the Bruce, "And musing mind
Might here a graver moral find.
These mighty cliffs, that heave on high
Their naked brows to middle sky,

Indifferent to the sun or snow,
Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,
May they not mark a Monarch's fate,—
Raised high 'mid storms of strife and state,
Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
His soul a rock. his heart a waste ?
O'er hope and love and fear aloft
High rears his crowned head—But soft !
Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag.
Who may they be ? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread ? ”—

XVIII.

“ So said I—and believed in sooth,”
Ronald replied, “ I spoke the truth.
Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
Five men— they mark us and come on ;
And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the land of Lorn,
Foes to my Liege.”—“ So let it be ;
I've faced worse odds than five to three—
— But the poor page can little aid ;
Then be our battle thus array'd,
If our free passage they contest ;
Cope thou with two, I'll match the rest.”—
“ Not so, my Liege — for, by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble strife ;
My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
And less the loss should Ronald fall.
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow,
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my Monarch's order given,
Two shafts should make our number even.”—
“ No ! not to save my life ! ” he said ;
“ Enough of blood rests on my head,

Too rashly spill'd—we soon shall know,
Whether they come as friend or foe."

XIX.

Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh ;—
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye.
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-looked, unwilling to be seen ;¹
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face.
The foremost two were fair array'd,
With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,
And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears.
The three, that lagg'd small space behind,
Seem'd serfs of more degraded kind ;
Goat-skins or deer-hides o'er them cast,
Made a rude fence against the blast ;
Their arms and feet and heads were bare,
Matted their beards, unshorn their hair ;
For arms, the caitiffs bore in hand,
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

XX.

Onward, still mute, they kept the track ;—
"Tell who ye be, or else stand back,"
Said Bruce ; "In deserts when they meet,
Men pass not as in peaceful street."
Still, at his stern command, they stood,
And proffer'd greeting brief and rude,
But acted courtesy so ill,
As seem'd of fear, and not of will.

¹ The story of Bruce's meeting the banditti is copied, with such alterations as the fictitious narrative rendered necessary, from a striking incident in the monarch's history, told by Barbour, the hero's biographer.

“Wanderers we are, as you may be;
Men hither driven by wind and sea,
Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
Will share with you this fellow deer.”—
“If from the sea, where lies your bark?”
“Ten fathoms deep in ocean dark!
Wreck’d yesternight: but we are men,
Who little sense of peril ken.
The shades come down—the day is shut—
Will you go with us to our hut?”—
“Our vessel waits us in the bay;
Thanks for your proffer—have good-day.”—
“Was that your galley, then, which rode
Not far from shore when evening glow’d?”—
“It was.”—“Then spare your needless pain,
There will she now be sought in vain.
We saw her from the mountain head,
When with St. George’s blazon red
A southern vessel bore in sight,
And yours raised sail, and took to flight.”—

XXI.

“Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!”
Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce;
“Nor rests there light enough to show
If this their tale be true or no.
The men seem bred of churlish kind,
Yet mellow nuts have hardest rind:
We will go with them—food and fire
And sheltering roof our wants require.
Sure guard ’gainst treachery will we keep,
And watch by turns our comrades’ sleep.—
Good fellows, thanks; your guests we’ll be,
And well will pay the courtesy
Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—
—Nay, soft! we mix not companies.—

Show us the path o'er crag and stone,
And we will follow you ;—lead on."

XXII.

They reach'd the dreary cabin, made
Of sails against a rock display'd,

And there, on entering, found
A slender boy, whose form and mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,
Low seated on the ground.

His garb was such as minstrels wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
His youthful cheek was marr'd by care,
His eyes in sorrow drown'd.

" Whence this poor boy ? "—As Ronald spoke,
The voice his trance of anguish broke ;
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and scream,
And wildly gazed around ;
Then to the wall his face he turn'd,
And his dark neck with blushes burn'd.

XXIII.

" Whose is the boy ? " again he said.
" By chance of war our captive made ;
He may be yours, if you should hold
That music has more charms than gold ;
For, though from earliest childhood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,
And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee ;
For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
It pipes upon the galley's shroud,
Makes blither melody."—

“Hath he, then, sense of spoken sound?”—

“Aye; so his mother bade us know,
A crone in our late shipwreck drown’d,

And hence the silly strivling’s woe,
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday;
When wind and weather wax’d so grim.
We little list’d think of him.—

But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords.”
Sudden the captive turn’d his head,
And one quick glance to Ronald sped.
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the Chief the signal took.

XXIV.

“Kind host,” he said, “our needs require
A separate board and separate fire;
For know, that on a pilgrimage
Wend I, my comrade, and this page.
And, sworn to vigil and to fast,
Long as this hallow’d task shall last,
We never doff the plaid or sword,
Or feast us at a stranger’s board;
And never share one common sleep,
But one must still his vigil keep.
Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
We’ll hold this hut’s remoter end.”—
“A churlish vow,” the eldest said,
“And hard, methinks, to be obey’d.
How say you, if, to wreak the scorn
That pays our kindness harsh return,
We should refuse to share our meal?”—
“Then say we, that our swords are steel!
And our vow binds us not to fast,
Where gold or force may buy repast.”

Their host's dark brow grew keen and fell,
His teeth are clench'd, his features swell ;
Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
Nor could his craven courage brook
The Monarch's calm and dauntless look.
With laugh constrain'd,—“Let every man
Follow the fashion of his clan !
Each to his separate quarters keep,
And feed or fast, or wake or sleep.

XXV.

Their fire at separate distance burns,
By turns they eat, keep guard by turns ;
For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance,
By doubt and cunning mark'd at once,
Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
From under eyebrows shagg'd and gray.
The younger, too, who seem'd his son,
Had that dark look the timid shun ;
The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
And scowl'd a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
'Till all, as darkness onward crept,
Couch'd down, and seem'd to sleep, or slept.
Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue
Must trust his eyes to wail his wrong,
A longer watch of sorrow made,
But stretch'd his limbs to slumber laid.

XXVI.

Not in his dangerous host confides
The King, but wary watch provides.

Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
Then wakes the King, young Allan last ;
Thus rank'd, to give the youthful page
The rest required by tender age.
What is Lord Ronald's wakeful thought,
To chase the languor toil had brought?—
(For deem not that he deign'd to throw
Much care upon such coward foe,)—
He thinks of lovely Isabel.
When at her foeman's feet she fell,
Nor less when, placed in princely selle,
She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
At Woodstocke when he won the prize.
Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair.
In pride of place as 'mid despair,
Must she alone engross his care.
His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
To Edith, turn--O how decide,
When here his love and heart are given,
And there his faith stands plight to Heaven!
No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
For seldom lovers long for sleep.
Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
Answer'd the dog-fox with his howl,
Then waked the King—at his request,
Lord Ronald stretch'd himself to rest.

XXVII.

What spell was good King Robert's, say,
To drive the weary night away ?
His was the patriot's burning thought,
Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
Of castles storm'd, of cities freed,
Of deep design and daring deed,
Of England's roses reft and torn,
And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,

Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
As heroes think, so thought the Bruce.
No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
Sleep shunn'd the monarch's thoughtful eye.
Now over Coolin's eastern head
The greyish light begins to spread,
The otter to his cavern drew,
And clamour'd shrill the wakening mew ;
Then watch'd the page—to needful rest
The King resign'd his anxious breast.

XXVIII.

To Allan's eyes was harder task,
The weary watch their safeties ask.
He trimm'd the fire, and gave to shine
With bickering light the splinter'd pine ;
Then gazed awhile, where silent laid
Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid.
But little fear waked in his mind,
For he was bred of martial kind,
And, if to manhood he arrive,
May match the boldest knight alive.
Then thought he of his mother's tower,
His little sisters' greenwood bower,
How there the Easter-gambols pass,
And of Dan Joseph's lengthen'd mass.
But still before his weary eye
In rays prolong'd the blazes die—
Again he roused him—on the lake
Look'd forth, where now the twilight-flake
Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay furl'd,
The morning breeze the lake had curl'd,
The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
With ceaseless plush kiss'd cliff or sand ;—

It was a slumbrous sound—he turn'd
To tales at which his youth had burn'd,
Of pilgrim's path by demon cross'd,
Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell,¹
Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
And on his sight the vaults arise;
That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
His foot is on the marble floor,
And o'er his head the dazzling spurs
Gleam like a firmament of stars!
—Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak
Her anger in that thrilling shriek!—
No! all too late, with Allan's dream
Mingled the captive's warning scream.
As from the ground he strives to start,
A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
Upward he casts his dizzy eyes, . . .
Murmurs his master's name, . . . and dies!

XXIX.

Not so awake the King! his hand
Snatch'd from the flame a knotted brand,
The nearest weapon of his wrath;
With this he cross'd the murderer's path,
And venged young Allen well!
The spatter'd brain and bubbling blood
Hiss'd on the half-extinguish'd wood,
The miscreant gasp'd and fell!

¹ Imagination can hardly conceive anything more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Alexander Mac-Allister, Esq., of Strathaird. It has since been much and deservedly celebrated, and a full account of its beauties has been published by Dr. Mac-Lenay of Oban.

Nor rose in peace the Island Lord ;
One caitiff died upon his sword,
And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
In mortal grapple overthrown.
But while Lord Ronald's dagger drank
The life-blood from his panting flank,
The Father-ruffian of the band
Behind him rears a coward hand !

—O for a moment's aid,
Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,
Dash to the earth another foe,

Above his comrade laid !—
And it is gain'd—the captive sprung
On the raised arm, and closely clung,
And, ere he shook him loose,
The master'd felon press'd the ground,
And gasp'd beneath a mortal wound,
While o'er him stands the Bruce.

XXX.

“ Miscreant ! while lasts thy flitting spark,
Give me to know the purpose dark,
That arm'd thy hand with murderous knife,
Against offenceless stranger's life ? ”—
“ No stranger thou ! ” with accent fell,
Murmur'd the wretch ; “ I know thee well ;
And know thee for the foe-man sworn
Of my high chief, the mighty Lorn.”—
“ Speak yet again, and speak the truth
For thy soul's sake !—from whence this youth ?
His country, birth, and name declare,
And thus one evil deed repair.”—
—“ Vex me no more ! . . . my blood runs cold .
No more I know than I have told.

We found him in a bark we sought
With different purpose . . . and I thought"
Fate cut him short ; in blood and broil,
As he had lived, aied Cormac Doil.

XXXI.

Then resting on his bloody blade,
The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
" Now shame upon us both !—that boy
 Lifts his mute face to heaven,
And clasps his hands, to testify
His gratitude to God on high,
 For strange deliverance given.
His speechless gesture thanks hath paid,
Which our free tongues have left unsaid !"
He raised the youth with kindly word,
But mark'ä him shudder at the sword :
He cleansed it from its hue of death,
And plunged the weapon in its sheath.
" Alas, poor child ! unfitting part
Fate doom'd, when with so soft a heart,
 And form so slight as thine,
She made thee first a pirate's slave,
Then, in his stead, a patron gave
 Of wayward lot like mine ;
A landless prince, whose wandering life
Is but one scene of blood and strife—
Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be,
But he'll find resting-place for thee.—
Come, noble Ronald ! o'er the dead
Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been wroke ;
Come, wend we hence —the day has broke.
Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
Was false, that she had hoisted sail."

XXXII.

Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
The Island Lord bade sad farewell
To Allan :—" Who shall tell this tale,"
He said, " in halls of Donagaile !
Oh, who his widow'd mother tell,
That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell !—
Rest thee, poor youth ! and trust my care
For mass and knell and funeral prayer ;
While o'er those caitiffs, where they lie,
The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry ! "
And now the eastern mountain's head
On the dark lake threw lustre red ;
Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
Ravine and precipice and peak—
(So earthly power at distance shows ;
Reveals his splendour, hides his woes.)
O'er sheets of granite, dark and broad,
Rent and unequal, lay the road.
In sad discourse the warriors wind,
And the mute captive moves behind.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO FOURTH.

STRANGER ! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne ;
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

Yes ! 'twas sublime, but sad.—The loneliness
Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye ;
And strange and awful fears began to press
Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wished some woodman's cottage nigh,
Something that show'd of life, though low and mean ;
Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol would have been,
Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
An awful thrill that softens into sighs ;
Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,
In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise :
Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,
Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

II.

Through such wild scenes the champion pass'd,
When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and fast.
“There,” said the Bruce, “rung Edward's horn !
What can have caused such brief return ?
And see, brave Ronald,—see him dart
O'er stock and stone like hunted hart,
Precipitate, as is the use,
In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
—He marks us, and his eager cry
Will tell his news ere he be nigh.”

III.

Loud Edward shouts, “What make ye here,
Warring upon the mountain-deer,
When Scotland wants her King ?
A bark from Lennox cross'd our track,
With her in speed I hurried back,
These joyful news to bring—
The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
And Douglas wakes his native vale ;
Thy storm-toss'd fleet hath won its way
With little loss to Brodick-Bay,

And Lennox, with a gallant band,
Waits but thy coming and command
To waft them o'er to Carrick strand.
There are blithe news!—but mark the close!
Edward, the deadliest of o'rr foes,
As with his host he northward pass'd,
Hath on the Borders breathed his last."

IV.

Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
Was little wont his joy to speak,
But then his colour rose:
"Now, Scotland! shortly shalt thou see,
With God's high will, thy children free,
And vengeance on thy foes!
Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, Heaven, belongs
My joy o'er Edward's bier;¹
I took my knighthood at his hand,
And lordship held of him, and land,
And well may vouch it here,
That, blot the story from his page,
Of Scotland ruin'd in his rage,
You read a monarch brave and sage,
And to his people dear."—
"Let London burghers mourn her Lord,
And Croydon monks his praise record,"
The eager Edward said;
"Eternal as his own, my hate
Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
And dies not with the dead!

¹ The generosity which does justice to the character of an enemy, often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour. He seldom mentions a fallen enemy without praising such good qualities as he might possess.

Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
 When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
 That pointed yet to Scotland's land,†

As his last accents pray'd
 Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
 If he one Scottish head should spare,
 Till stretch'd upon the bloody lair

Each rebel corpse was laid !
 Such hate was his, when his last breath
 Renounced the peaceful house of death,
 And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
 Be borne by his remorseless host,
 As if his dead and stony eye
 Could still enjoy her misery !
 Such hate was his—dark, deadly, long ;
 Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong !”—

V.

“ Let women, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords :
 Nor doubt of living foes, to sate
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.
 Now to the sea ! behold the beach,
 And see the galleys' pendants stretch
 Their fluttering length down favouring gale !
 Aboard, aboard ! and hoist the sail.
 Hold we our way for Arran first,
 Where meet in arms our friends dispersed ;
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle fray.
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard spread.—
 Does noble Ronald share our course,
 Or stay to raise his island force ?”

“Come weal, come woe, by Bruce’s side,”
Replied the Chief, “will Ronald bide.
And since two galleys yonder ride,
Be mine, so please my liege, dismiss’d
To wake to arms the clans of Uist.
And all who hear the Minche’s roar,
On the Long Island’s lonely shore.
The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
Ourselves may summon in our way ;
And soon on Arran’s shore shall meet,
With Torquil’s aid, a gallant fleet,
If aught avails their Chieftain’s host
Among the islesmen of the west.”

VI.

Thus was their venturous council said.
But, ere their sails the galleys spread,
Coriskin dark and Coolin high
Echoed the dirge’s doleful cry.
Along that sable lake pass’d slow,—
Fit scene for such a sight of woe,—
The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore
The murder’d Allan to the shore.
At every pause, with dismal shout,
Their coronach of grief rung out,
And ever, when they moved again,
The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
And, with the pibroch’s shrilling wail,
Mourn’d the young heir of Donagail.
Round and around, from cliff and cave,
His answer stern old Coolin gave,
Till high upon his misty side
Languish’d the mournful notes, and died.
For never sounds, by mortal made,
Attain’d his high and haggard head,

That echoes but the tempest's moan,
Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

VII.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark,
She bounds before the gale,
The mountain breeze from Ben-na-darch
Is joyous in her sail !
With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse,
The cords and canvas strain,
The waves, divided by her force,
In rippling eddies chased her course,
As if they laugh'd again.
Not down the breeze more blithely flew,
Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
Than the gay galley bore
Her course upon that favouring wind,
And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
And Slapin's cavern'd shore.
'Twas then that warlike signals wake
Dunscath's dark towers and Eisord's lake,
And soon, from Cavilgarrih's head,
Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread ;
A summons these of war and wrath
To the brave clans of Sleat and Strath,
And, ready at the sight,
Each warrior to his weapons sprung,
And targe upon his shoulder flung,
Impatient for the fight.
Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare gray,
Had charge to muster their array,
And guide their barks to Brodick-Bay.

VIII.

Signal of Ronald's high command,
A beacon gleam'd o'er sea and land,

From Canna's tower, that, steep and gray,
Like falcon-rest o'erhangs the bay.¹
Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
To view the turret scathed by time ;
It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-deer.
But rest thee on the silver beach,
And let the aged herdsman teach
His tale of former day ;
His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
And for thy seat by ocean's side,
His varied plaid display ;
Then tell, how with their Chieftain came,
In ancient times, a foreign dame
To yonder turret gray.
Stern was her lord's suspicious mind,
Who in so rude a jail confined
So soft and fair a thrall !
And oft when moon on ocean slept,
That lovely lady sate and wept
Upon the castle-wall,
And turn'd her eye to southern climes, •
And thought perchance of happier times,
And touch'd her lute by fits, and sung
Wild ditties in her native tongue.
And still, when on the cliff and bay
Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
And every breeze is mute,
Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
Steals a strange pleasure mix'd with fear,

¹ The little island of Canna, or Cannay, adjoins to those of Rùm and Muick, with which it forms one parish. In a pretty bay opening towards the east, there is a lofty and slender rock detached from the shore. Upon the summit are the ruins of a very small tower, scarcely accessible by a steep and precipitous path. Here it is said one of the kings, or Lords of the Isles, confined a beautiful lady, of whom he was jealous. The ruins are of course haunted by her restless spirit, and many romantic stories are told by the aged people of the island concerning her fate in life, and her appearances after death.

While from that cliff he seems to hear
 The murmur of a lute,
 And sounds, as of a captive lone,
 That mourns her woes in tongue unknown.—
 Strange is the tale—but all too long
 Already hath it staid the song—
 Yet who may pass them by,
 That crag and tower in ruins gray,
 Nor to their hapless tenant pay
 The tribute of a sigh !

IX.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
 O'er the broad ocean driven,
 Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
 The steersman's hand hath given.
 And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
 Their hunters to the shore,¹
 And each his ashen bow unbent,
 And gave his pastime o'er,
 And at the Island Lord's command,
 For hunting spear took warrior's brand.
 On Seoreigg next a warning light
 Summon'd her warriors to the fight ;
 A numerous race, ere stern Macleod
 O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode,²
 When all in vain the ocean-cave
 Its refuge to his victims gave.

¹ Ronin (popularly called Rùm, a name which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding if possible) is a very rough and mountainous island, adjacent to those of Eigg and Canna. There is almost no arable ground upon it.

² These, and the following lines of the stanza, refer to a dreadful tale of feudal vengeance, of which unfortunately there are relics that still attest the truth. Seor-Eigg is a high peak in the centre of the small Isle of Eigg, or Egg. It is well known to mineralogists, as affording many interesting specimens, and to others whom chance or curiosity may lead to the island, for the astonishing view of the mainland and neighbouring isles, which it commands.

The chief, relentless in his wrath,
With blazing heath blockades the path ;
In dense and stiling volumes roll'd,
The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold !
The warrior-threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams, were heard in vain ;
The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires !
The bones which strew that cavern's gloom,
Too well attest their dismal doom.

X.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark
On a breeze from the northward free,
So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
Or the swan through the summer sea.
The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
And Ulva dark and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.
Then all unknown its column rose,
Where dark and undisturb'd repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And welter'd in that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples deck'd
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise.
A Minster to her Maker's praise !^{*}
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend ;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,

^{*} See Note 19.

And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer draws,
In varied tone prolong'd and high,
That mocks the organ's melody.
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to say,
"Well hast thou done, frail Child of clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Task'd high and hard—but witness mine!"

XI.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark,
Before the gale she bounds;
So darts the dolphin from the shark,
Or the deer before the hounds.
They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
And they waken'd the men of the wild Tiree,
And the Chief of the sandy Coll;
They paused not at Columba's isle,
Though peal'd the bells from the holy pile
With long and measured toll;
No time for matin or for mass,
And the sounds of the holy summons pass
Away in the billows' roll.
Lochbuie's fierce and warlike Lord
Their signal saw, and grasp'd his sword,
And verdant Ilay call'd her host,
And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
Lord Ronald's call obey,
And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
And lonely Colonsay;
—Scenes sung by him who sings no more!
His bright and brief career is o'er,
And mute his tuneful strains;

Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
That loved the light of song to pour;
A distant and a deadly shore
Has LEYDEN'S cold remains !^{*}

XII.

Ever the breeze blows merrily,
But the galley ploughs no more the sea.
Lest, rounding wild Cantire, they meet
The southern foeman's watchful fleet,
They held unwonted way ;—
Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er,
As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
Upor the eastern bay.
It was a wondrous sight to see
Topmast and pennon glitter free,
High raised above the greenwood tree,
As on dry land the galley moves,
By cliff and copse and alder groves.
Deep import from that selcouth sign,
Did many a mountain Seer divine,
For ancient legends told the Gael,
That when a royal bark should sail
O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
And every foe should faint and quail
Before her silver Cross.

^{*} The ballad, entitled "Macphail of Colonsay, and the Mermaid of Corrievekin," was composed by John Leyden, from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801, soon before his fatal departure for India, where, after having made farther progress in Oriental literature than any man of letters who had embraced those studies, he died a martyr to his zeal for knowledge, in the island of Java, immediately after the landing of our forces near Batavia, in August, 1811.

XIII.

Now launch'd once more, the inland sea
 They furrow with fair augury,
 And steer for Arran's isle ;
 The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
 Ben-Ghoil, " the Mountain of the Wind,"
 Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
 And bade Loch Ranza smile.¹
 Thither their destined course they drew ;
 It seem'd the isle her monarch knew,
 So brilliant was the landward view,
 The ocean so serene ;
 Each puny wave in diamonds roll'd
 O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
 With azure strove and green.
 The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
 Glow'd with the tints of evening's hour,
 The beach was silver sheen,
 The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
 And, oft renew'd, seem'd oft to die,
 With breathless pause between.
 O who, with speech of war and woes,
 Would wish to break the soft repose
 Of such enchanting scene !

XIV.

Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks ?
 The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
 The timid look, and downcast eye,
 And faltering voice the theme deny.
 And good King Robert's brow express'd,
 He ponder'd o'er some high request,
 As doubtful to approve ;

¹ Ben-Ghaill, " the mountain of the winds," is generally known by its English, and less poetical name, of Goatfield. Loch Ranza is a beautiful bay, on the northern extremity of Arran, opening towards East Tarbat Loch.

Yet in his eye and lip the while,
Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
Which manhood's graver mood beguile,
When lovers talk of love.

Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled ;
—" And for my bride betrothed," he said,
" My Liege has heard the rumour spread
Of Edith from Artornish fled.

Too hard her fate—I claim no right
To blame her for her hasty flight ;
Be joy and happiness her lot !—
But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
And Lorn recall'd his promised plight,
In the assembled chieftains' sight.—

When, to fulfil our fathers' band,
I proffer'd all I could—my hand—
I was repulsed with scorn ;
Mine honour I should ill assert,
And worse the feelings of my heart,
If I should play a suitor's part
Again, to pleasure Lorn."—

XV.

" Young Lord," the Royal Bruce replied,
" That question must the Church decide ;
Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
The very tie, which she hath broke,
To thee should still be binding yoke.
But, for my sister Isabel—
The mood of woman who can tell ?
I guess the Champion of the Rock,
Victorious in the tourney shock,
That knight unknown, to whom the prize
She dealt,—had favour in her eyes ;

But since our brother Nigel's fate,
Our ruin'd house and hapless state,
From worldly joy and hope estranged,
Much is the hapless mourner changed.
Perchance," here smiled the noble King,
"This tale may other musings bring.
Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
The little convent of Saint Bride ;
There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
Till fate shall give more prosperous day ;
And thither will I bear thy suit,
Nor will thine advocate be mute."

XVI.

As thus they talk'd in earnest mood,
That speechless boy beside them stood.
He stoop'd his head against the mast,
And bitter sobs came thick and fast,
A grief that would not be repress'd,
But seem'd to burst his youthful breast.
His hands, against his forehead held,
As if by force his tears repell'd,
But through his fingers, long and slight,
Fast trill'd the drops of crystal bright.
Edward, who walk'd the deck apart,
First spied this conflict of the heart.
Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind ;
By force the slender hand he drew
From those poor eyes that stream'd with dew.
As in his hold the stripling strove,—
('Twas a rough grasp, though meant in love,)
Away his tears the warrior swept,
And bade shame on him that he wept.
" I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong !

For, were he of our crew the best,
The insult went not unredress'd.
Come, cheer thee ; thou art now of age
To be a warrior's gallant page ;
Thou shalt be mine !— a palfrey fair
O'er hill and holt my boy shall bear,
To hold my bow in hunting grove,
Or speed on errand to my love ;
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes dwell."

XVII.

Bruce interposed,—“ Gay Edward, no,
This is no youth to hold thy bow,
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless, for this orphan child.
See'st thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals ?
Fitter by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,
With father Augustin to share
The peaceful change of convent prayer,
Than wander wild adventures through,
With such a reckless guide as you.”—
“ Thanks, brother ! ” Edward answer'd gay,
“ For the high laud thy words convey !
But we may learn some future day,
If thou or I can this poor boy
Protect the best, or best employ.
Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand ;
Launch we the boat, and seek the land.”

XVIII.

To land King Robert lightly sprung,
And thrice aloud his bugle rung
With note prolong'd and varied strait,
Till bold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
Had in a glen a hart at bay,
And Lennox cheer'd the laggard hounds,
When waked that horn the greenwood bounds.
"It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who came
In breathless haste with eye on flame,—
"It is the foe!—Each valiant lord
Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword!"—
"Not so," replied the good Lord James,
"That blast no English bugle claims.
Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight.
Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear;
Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring;
That blast was winded by the King!"*

XIX.

Fast to their mates the tidings spread
And fast to shore the warriors sped.
Bursting from glen and greenwood tree,
High waked their loyal jubilee!
Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
And clasp'd his hands, and wept aloud.
Veterans of early fields were there,
Whose helmets press'd their hoary hair,
Whose swords and axes bore a stain
From life-blood of the red-hair'd Dane;

* The passage in Barbour, describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognized by Douglas and those of his followers who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting.

And boys, whose hands scarce brook'd to wield
The heavy sword or bossy shield.
Men too were there, that bore the scars
Impress'd in Albyn's woful wars,
At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
Teyndrum's dread rout and Methven's flight;
The might of Douglas there was seen,
There Lennox with his graceful mien;
Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded Knight;
The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light;
The Heir of murder'd De la Haye,
And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay.
Around their King regain'd they press'd,
Wept, shouted, clasp'd him to their breast,
And young; and old, and serf and lord,
And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
And he in many a peril tried,
Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
And live or die by Bruce's side!

XX.

Oh, War! thou hast thy fierce delight,
Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!
Such gleams as from thy polish'd shield,
Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
Such transports wake, severe and high,
Amid the pealing conquest-cry;
Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
Must'ring the remnants of a host,
And as each comrade's name they tell,
Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
Kritting stern brow o'er flashing eye,
Vow to avenge them or to die!—
Warriors!—and where are warriors found,
If not on martial Britain's ground?

And who, when waked with note of fire,
 Love more than they the British lyre ?—
 Know ye not,—hearts to honour dear !
 That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, severe,
 At which the heartstrings vibrate high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye ?
 And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
 Of tear is on his manly face,
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hail'd at Scone his early reign,
 This patriot band around him hung,
 And to his knees and bosom clung ?—
 Blame ye the Bruce ?—his brother blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while ashamed,
 With haughty laugh his head he turn'd,
 And dashed away the tear he scorn'd.¹

XXI.

'Tis morning, and the Convent bell
 Long time had ceased its matin knell,
 Within thy walls, Saint Bride !
 An aged Sister sought the cell
 Assign'd to Lady Isabel,
 And hurriedly she cried,
 " Haste, gentle Lady, haste—there waits
 A noble stranger at the gates ;
 Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has seen
 A Knight of such a princely mien ;
 His errand, as he bade me tell,
 Is with the Lady Isabel."
 The princess rose,—for on her knee
 Low bent she told her rosary,—
 " Let him by thee his purpose teach ;
 I may not give a stranger speech."—

¹ See Note 20.

“ Saint Bride forefend, then royal Maid ! ”
The portress cross’d herself, and said,—
“ Not to be prioress might I
Debate his will, his suit deny.”—
“ Has earthly show then, simple fool,
Power o’er a sister of thy rule,
And art thou, like the worldly train,
Subdued by splendours light and vain ? ”

XXII.

“ No, Lady ! in old eyes like mine,
Gauds have no glitter, gems no shine ;
Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
One youthful page is all his train.
It is the form, the eye, the word,
The bearing of that stranger Lord ;
His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
Built like a castle’s battled wall,
Yet moulded in such just degrees,
His giant-strength seems lightsome ease.
Close as the tendrils of the vine
His locks upon his forehead twine,
Jet-black, save where some touch of gray
Has ta’en the youthful hue away.
Weather and war their rougher trace
Have left on that majestic face ;—
But ’tis his dignity of eye !
There, if a suppliant, would I fly,
Secure, ’mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
Of sympathy, redress, relief—
That glance, if guilty, would I dread
More than the doom that spoke me dead ! ”
“ Enough, enough,” the princess cried,
“ ’Tis Scotland’s hope, her joy, her pride ! ”

The Lord of the Isles.

To meaner front was ne'er assign'd
Such mastery o'er the common mind—
Bestow'd thy high designs to aid,
How long, O Heaven! how long delay'd!—
Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
My darling brother, royal Bruce!"

XXIII.

They met like friends who part in pain,
And meet in doubtful hope again.
But when subdued that fitful swell,
The Bruce survey'd the humble cell;—
"And this is thine, poor Isabel!—
That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
For room of state, and bed of pull;
For costly robes and jewels rare,
A string of beads and zone of hair;
And for the trumpet's sprightly call
To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
'Twixt hours of penitence and prayer!—
O ill for thee, my royal claim
From the first David's sainted name!
O woe for thee, that while he sought
His right, thy brother feebly fought!"—

XXIV.

"Now lay those vain regrets aside,
And be the unshaken Bruce!" she cried.
"For more I glory to have shared
The woes thy venturous spirit dared,
When raising first thy valiant band
In rescue of thy native land,

Than had fair Fortune set me down
The partner of an empire's crown.*
And grieve not that on Pleasure's stream
No more I drive in giddy dream,
For Heaven the erring pilot knew,
And from the gulf the vessel drew.
Tried me with judgments stern and great,
My house's ruin, thy defeat,
Poor Nigel's death, till, tamed, I own
My hopes are fixed on Heaven alone ;
Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
My heart to this vain world of sin."—

XXV.

"Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice,
First wilt thou wait thy brother's voice ;
Then ponder if in convent scene
No softer thoughts might intervene—
Say they were of that unknown Knight,
Victor in Woodstock's tourney-fight—
Nay, if his name such blush you owe,
Victorious o'er a fairer foe !"
Truly his penetrating eye
Hath caught that blush's passing dye,—
Like the last beam of evening thrown
On a white cloud,—just seen and gone.
Soon with calm cheek and steady eye,
The princess made composed reply :—
"I guess my brother's meaning well ;
For not so silent is the cell,
But we have heard the islesmen all
Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
And mine eye proves that Knight unknown
And the brave Island Lord are one.—

Had then his suit been earlier made,
 In his own name, with thee to aid,
 (But that his plighted faith forbade.)
 I know not But thy page so near?—
 This is no tale for menial's ear."

XXVI.

Still stood that page, as far apart
 As the small cell would space afford;
 With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
 He leant his weight on Bruce's sword,
 The monarch's mantle too he bore,
 And drew the fold his visage o'er.
 "Fear not for him—in murderous strife,"
 Said Bruce, "his warning saved my life;
 Full seldom parts he from my side,
 And in his silence I confide,
 Since he can tell no tale again.
 He is a boy of gentle strain,
 And I have purposed he shall dwell
 In Augustin the chaplain's cell,
 And wait on thee, my Isabel.—
 Mind not his tears; I've seen them flow,
 As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
 'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
 Unfit against the tide to pull,
 And those that with the Bruce would sail,
 Must learn to strive with stream and gale.—
 But forward, gentle Isabel—
 My answer for Lord Ronald tell."—

XXVII.

"This answer be to Ronald given—
 The heart he asks is fi'd on heaven.



LOCH CORISKIN

But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
That sees grim Odin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

From the poem by J. M. W. Turner, R.A.

My love was like a summer flower,
That wither'd in the wintry hour,
Born but of vanity and pride,
And with these sunny visions died.
If further press his suit—then say,
He should his plighted troth obey,
Troth plighted both with ring and word,
And sworn on crucifix and sword.—
Oh, shame thee, Robert ! I have seen
Thou hast a woman's guardian been !
Even in extremity's dread hour,
When press'd on thee the Southern power,
And safety, to all human sight,
Was only found in rapid flight,
Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
In agony of travail-pain,
And thou didst bid thy little band
Upon the instant turn and stand,
And dare the worst the foe might do,
Rather than, like a knight untrue,
Leave to pursuers merciless
A woman in her last distress.—¹
And wilt thou now deny thine aid
To an oppress'd and injured maid,
Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
And press his fickle faith on me ?—
So witness heaven, as true I vow,
Had I those earthly feelings now,
Which could my former bosom move
Ere taught to set its hopes above,
I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
Till at my feet he laid the ring,

¹ This incident, which illustrates so happily the chivalrous generosity of Bruce's character, is one of the many simple and natural traits recorded by Barbour. It occurred during the expedition which Bruce made to Ireland, to support the pretensions of his brother Edward to the throne of that kingdom.

The ring and spousal contract both,
And fair acquittal of his oath,
By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
The ill-requited Maid of Lorn ! ”

XXVIII.

With sudden impulse forward sprung
The page, and on her neck he hung ;
Then, recollected instantly,
His head he stoop'd, and bent his knee,
Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel,
Arose, and sudden left the coll.—
The princess, loosen'd from his hold,
Blush'd angry at his bearing bold ;
But good King Robert cried,
“ Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind,
He heard the plan my care design'd,
Nor could his transports hide.—
But, sister, now bethink thee well ;
No easy choice the convent cell ;
Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
Either to force thy hand or heart,
Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn,
Or wrong for thee, the Maid of Lorn.
But think,—not long the time has been,
That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
And wouldst the ditties best approve,
That told some lay of hapless love.
Now are thy wishes in thy power,
And thou art bent on cloister bower !
O ! if our Edward knew the change,
How would his busy satire range,
With many a sarcasm varied still
On woman's wish, and woman's will ! ”

XXIX.

"Brother, I well believe," she said,
"Even so would Edward's part be play'd.
Kindly in heart, in word severe,
A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
He holds his humour uncontroll'd ;
But thou art of another mould.
Say then to Ronald, as I say,
Unless before my feet he lay
The ring which bound the faith he swore,
By Edith freely yielded o'er,
He moves his suit to me no more.
Nor do I promise, even if now
He stood absolved of spousal vow,
That I would change my purpose made,
To shelter me in holy shade.—
Brother, for little space, farewell !
To other duties warns the bell."—

XXX.

"Lost to the world," King Robert said,
When he had left the royal maid,
"Lost to the world, by lot severe,
O what a gem lies buried here,
Nipp'd by misfortune's cruel frost,
The buds of fair affection lost !—
But what have I with love to do ?
Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
—Pent in this isle we may not lie,
Nor would it long our wants supply.
Right opposite, the mainland towers
Of my own Turnberry court our powers—
—Might not my father's beadsman hear,
Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,

Kindle a signal-flame, to show
The time propitious for the blow ?
It shall be so—some friend shall bear
Our mandate with despatch and care ;
—Edward shall find the messenger.
That fortress ours, the island fleet
May on the coast of Carrick meet.—
O Scotland ! shall it e'er be mine
To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
To raise my victor-head, and see
Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free,—
That glance of bliss is all I crave,
Betwixt my labours and my grave ! ”
Then down the hill he slowly went,
Oft pausing on the steep descent,
And reach'd the spot where his bold train
Held rustic camp upon the plain.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO FIFTH.

ON fair Loch-Ranza stream'd the early day,
'Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke are upward curl'd
From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
And circling mountains sever from the world.
And there the fisherman his sail unfurl'd,
The goat-herd drove his kids to steep Ben-Ghoil,
Before the hut the dame her spindle twirl'd,
Courting the sunbeam as she plied her toil,—
For, wake where'er he may, Man wakes to care and coil.

But other duties call'd each convent maid,
Roused by the summons of the moss-grown bell ;
Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to tell.
And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer ;
The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
As stoop'd her gentle head in meek devotion there,

II.

She raised her eyes, that duty done,
When glanced upon the pavement-stone,
Gemm'd and enchased, a golden ring,
Bound to a scroll with silken string,
With few brief words inscribed to tell,
"This for the Lady Isabel."
Within, the writing farther bore,—
"'Twas with this ring his plight he swore,
With this his promise I restore;
To her who can the heart command,
Well may I yield the plighted hand.
And O ! for better fortune born,
Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
Her who was Edith once of Lorn !"
One single flash of glad surprise
Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
But vanish'd in the blush of shame,
That, as its penance, instant came.
"O thought unworthy of my race !
Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
A moment's throb of joy to own,
That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown !—
Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
Think not thy lustre here shall gain
Another heart to hope in vain !
For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,
Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
And worldly splendours sink debased."
Then by the cross the ring she placed.

III.

Next rose the thought,—its owner far.
How came it here through bolt and bar?
But the dim lattice is ajar.—

She looks abroad—the morning dew
A light short step had brush'd anew,
 And there were foot-prints seen
On the carved buttress rising still,
Till on the mossy window-sill
 Their track effaced the green.
The ivy twigs were torn and fray'd,
As if some climber's steps to aid,—
But who the hardy messenger,
Whose venturous path these signs infer?—
“Strange doubts are mine!—Mona, draw nigh;
—Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—
What strangers, gentle mother, say,
Have sought these holy walls to-day? ”—
“None, Lady, none of note or name;
Only your brother's foot-page came,
At peep of dawn—I pray'd him pass
To chapel where they said the mass;
But like an arrow he shot by,
And tears seem'd bursting from his eye.”

IV.

The truth at once on Isabel,
As darted by a sunbeam fell. —
“’Tis Edith's self! —her speechless woo,
Her form, her looks, the secret show!
—Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
And to my royal brother say,
I do conjure him seek my cell,
With that mute page he loves so well.”—
“What! know'st thou not his warlike host
At break of day has left our coast?
My old eyes saw them from the tower.
At eve they couch'd in greenwood bower,

At dawn a bugle-signal, made
By their bold Lord, their ranks array'd ;
Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,
No time for benedicite !
Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,
Just shake the dewdrops from their hair,
And toss their armed crests aloft,
Such matins theirs ! ” — “ Good mother, soft—
Where does my brother bend his way ? ” —
“ As I have heard, for Brodick-Bay,
Across the isle—of barks a score
Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them o'er,
On sudden news, to Carrick-shore.” —
“ If such their purpose, deep the need,”
Said anxious Isabel, “ of speed !
Call Father Augustine, good dame.”
The nun obeyed, the Father came.

V.

“ Kind Father, hie without delay,
Across the hills to Brodick-Bay.
This message to the Bruce be given ;
I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
That, till he speak with me, he stay !
Or, if his haste brook no delay,
That he deliver, on my suit,
Into thy charge that stripling mute.
Thus prays his sister Isabel,
For causes more than she may tell—
Away, good father !—and take heed,
That life and death are on thy speed.”
His cowl the good old priest did on,
Took his piked staff and sandall'd shoon,
And, like a pulmer bent by eld,
O'er moss and moor his journey held.

VI.

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
And rugged was the pilgrimage ;
But none was there beside, whose care
Might such important message bear.
Through birchen copse he wander'd slow,
Stunted and sapless, thin and low ;
By many a mountain stream he pass'd,
From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
Dashing to foam their waters dun,
And sparkling in the summer sun.
Round his grey head the wild curlew
In many a fearless circle flew.
O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride ;¹
He cross'd his brow beside the stone,
Where Druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled,²
He breathed a timid prayer for those
Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
There told his hours within the shade,
And at the stream his thirst allay'd.
Thence onward journeying slowly still,
As evening closed he reach'd the hill,

¹ The interior of the island of Arran abounds with beautiful highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataracts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth.

² The Isle of Arran, like those of Man and Anglesea, abounds with many relics of heathen, and probably Druidical, superstition. There are high erect columns of unhewn stone, the most early of all monuments, the circles of rude stones, commonly entitled Druidical, and the cairns, or sepulchral piles, within which are usually found urns enclosing ashes. Much doubt necessarily rests upon the history of such monuments, nor is it possible to consider them as exclusively Celtic, or Druidical. By much the finest circles of standing stones, excepting Stonehenge, are those of Stenhouse, at Stennis, in the island of Pomona, the principal Isle of the Orkades. These, of course, are neither Celtic nor Druidical ; and we are assured that many circles of the kind occur both in Sweden and Norway.

Where, rising through the woodland green,
 Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen,
 From Hastings, late their English lord,
 Douglas had won them by the sword.¹
 The sun that sunk behind the isle,
 Now tinged them with a parting smile.

VII.

But though the beams of light decay,
 'Twas bustle all in Brodick-Bay.
 The Bruce's followers crowd the shore,
 And boats and barges some unmoor,
 Some raise the sail, some seize the oar;
 Their eyes oft turn'd where glimmer'd far
 What might have seem'd an early star
 On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
 Was all too flickering, fierce, and bright.

Far distant in the south, the ray

Shone pale amid retiring day,

But as, on Carrick shore,

Dim seen in outline faintly blue,

The shades of evening closer drew,

It kindled more and more.

The monk's slow steps now press the sands,
 And now amid a scene he stands,

Full strange to churchman's eye;

Warriors, who, arming for the fight.

Rivet and clasp their harness light,

And twinkling spears, and axes bright,

And helmets flashing high.

Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears,

A language much unmeet he hears,²

While, hastening all on board,

¹ See Note 21.

² Barbour, with great simplicity, gives an anecdote, from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was, at this time, confined to military men. As Douglas,

As stormy as the swelling surge
That mix'd its roar, the leaders urge
Their followers to the ocean verge,
With many a haughty word.

VIII.

Through that wild throng the Father pass'd,
And reach'd the Royal Bruce at last.
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float,
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave,
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,
And loosen'd in its sheath his brand.
Edward and Lennox were at hand,
Douglas and Ronald had the care
The soldiers to the barks to share.—
The Monk approach'd and homage paid;
“And art thou come,” King Robert said,
“So far to bless us ere we part?”—
—“My Liege, and with a loyal heart!—
But other charge I have to tell,”—
And spoke the best of Isabel.
—“Now by St. Giles,” the monarch cried,
“This moves me much!--this morning tide,
I sent the stripling to Saint Bride.
With my commandment there to bide.”
—“Thither he came, the portress show'd,
But there, my Liege, made brief abode.”—

after his return from his expedition into the mountainous country of the Isles, near the water of Linc, he chanced to hear some persons in a far-house say “*the devil*.” Concluding from this hardy expression, that the house contained warlike guests, he immediately assailed it, and had the good fortune to make prisoners Thomas Randolph, afterwards the famous Earl of Murray, and Alexander Stuart, Lord Bogle. Both were then in the English interest, and had come into that country with the purpose of driving out Douglas. They afterwards ranked among Bruce's most zealous adherents.

IX.

"'Twas I," said Edward, "found employ
Of nobler import for the boy.
Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
A fitting messenger to find,
To bear thy written mandate o'er
To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
I found the stripling on a tomb
Low-seated, weeping for the doom
That gave his youth to convent gloom.
I told my purpose, and his eyes
Flash'd joyful at the glad surprise.
He bounded to the skiff, the sail
Was spread before a prosperous gale,
And well my charge he hath obey'd ;
For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guard carelessly our father's hall."—

X.

"O wild of thought, and hard of heart!"
Answer'd the monarch, "on a part
Of such deep danger to employ
A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
Unfit for fight, unfit for strife,
Without a tongue to plead for life!
Now, were my right restored by Heaven,
Edward, my crown I would have given,
Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
I peril'd thus the helpless child."—
—Offended half, and half submiss,
"Brother and Liege, of blame like this,"

Edward replied, "I little dream'd.
A stranger messenger, I deem'd,
Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
Where all thy squires are known so well.
Noteless his presence, sharp his sense,
His imperfection his defence.
If seen, none can his errand guess;
If ta'en, his words no tale express—
Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shute
Might expiate greater fault than mine."—
"Rash," said King Robert, "was the deed—
But it is done.—Embark with speed!—
Good Father, say to Isabel
How this unhappy chance befell;
If well we thrive on yonder shore,
Soon shall my care her page restore.
Our greeting to our sister bear,
And think of us in mass and prayer."—

XI.

"Aye!"—said the Priest, "while this poor hand
Can chalice raise or cross command,
While my old voice has accents' use,
Can Augustine forget the Bruce!"
Then to his side Lord Ronald press'd,
And whisper'd, "Bear thou this request,
That when by Bruce's side I fight,
For Scotland's crown and freedom's right,
The princess grace her knight to bear
Some token of her favouring care;
It shall be shown where England's best
May shrink to see it on my crest.
And for the boy—since weightier care
For royal Bruce the times prepare,
The helpless youth is Ronald's charge,
His couch my plaid, his fence my targe."

He ceased ; for many an eager hand
Had urged the barges from the strand.
Their number was a score and ten,
They bore thrice threescore chosen men.
With such small force did Bruce at last
The die for death or empire cast !

XII.

Now on the darkening main afloat,
Ready and mann'd rocks every boat ;
Beneath their oars the ocean's might
Was dash'd to sparks of glimmering light.
Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
Their armour glanced against the shore,
And, mingled with the dashing tide,
Their murmuring voices distant died.—
“ God speed them ! ” said the Priest, as dark
On distant billows glides each bark ;
“ O Heaven ! when swords for freedom shine,
And monarch's right, the cause is thine !
Edge doubly every patriot blow !
Beat down the banners of the foe !
And be it to the nations known,
That Victory is from God alone ! ”
As up the hill his path he drew,
He turn'd his blessings to renew,
Oft turn'd, till on the darken'd coast
All traces of their course were lost ;
Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
To shelter for the evening hour.

XIII.

In night the fairy prospects sink,
Where Cumray's isles with verdant link

Close the fair entrance of the Clyde ;
The woods of Bute, no more desciend,
Are gone—and on the placid sea
The rowers ply their task with glee,
While hands that knightly lances bore
Impatient aid the labouring oar.
The half-faced moon shone dim and pale,
And glanced against the whiten'd sail ;
But on that ruddy beacon-light
Each steersman kept the helm aright,
And oft, for such the King's command,
That all at once might reach the strand,
From boat to boat loud shout and hail
Warn'd them to crowd or slacken sail.
South and by west the armada bore,
And near at length the Carrick shore.
As less and less the distance grows,
High and more high the beacon rose ;
The light, that seem'd a twinkling star,
Now blazed portentous, fierce, and far.
Dark-red the heaven above it glow'd,
Dark-red the sea beneath it flow'd,
Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
In blood-red light her islets swim ;
Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl gave,
Dropp'd from their crags on plashing wave.
The deer to distant covert drew,
The black-cock deem'd it day, and crew.
Like some tall castle given to flame,
O'er half the land the lustre came.
“ Now, good my Liege, and brother sage,
What think ye of mine elfin page ? ”—
“ Row on ! ” the noble King replied,
“ We'll learn the truth whate'er betide ;
Yet sure the beadsman and the child
Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild.”

XIV.

With that the boats approach'd the land,
But Edward's grounded on the sand ;
The eager knight leap'd in the sea
Waist-deep, and first on shore was he,
Though every barge's hardy band
Contended which should gain the land,
When that strange light, which, seen afar,
Seem'd steady as the polar star,
Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
Seem'd travelling the realms of air.
Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,
As that portentous meteor rose ;
Helm, axe, and falchion glitter'd bright,
And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior saw,
Nor marvell'd it was pale with awe.
Then high in air the beams were lost,
And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
Ronald to Heaven a prayer address'd,
And Douglas cross'd his dauntless breast ;
“ Saint James protect us ! ” Lennox cried,
But reckless Edward spoke aside,
“ Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart endure
Once more to make assurance sure ? ”—
“ Hush ! ” said the Bruce ; “ we soon shall know,
If this be sorcerer's empty show,
Or stratagem of southern foe.
The moon shines out—upon the sand
Let every leader rank his band.”

XV.

Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
That ruddy light's unnatural dye ;

The dubious cold reflection lay
On the wet sands and quiet bay.
Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
His scatter'd files to order due,
Till shield compact and serried spear
In the cool light shone blue and clear.
Then down a path that sought the tide,
That speechless page was seen to glide ;
He knelt him lowly on the sand,
And gave a scroll to Robert's hand.
"A torch," the Monarch cried, "What, ho !
Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know."
But evil news the letters bare,
The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
Augmented, too, that very morn,
By mountaineers who came with Lorn.
Long harrow'd by oppressor's hand,
Courage and faith had fled the land,
And over Carrick, dark and deep,
Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—
Cuthbert had seen that beacon-flame,
Unwitting from what source it came.
Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore.

XVI.

As round the torch the leaders crowd,
Bruce read these chilling news aloud.
"What council, nobles, have we now ?—
To ambush us in greenwood bough,
And take the chance which fate may send
To bring our enterprise to end,
Or shall we turn us to the main
As exiles, and embark again ?"—

Answer'd fierce Edward, " Hap what may,
In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must stay.

I would not minstrels told the tale,
Wildfire or meteor made us quail."

Answer'd the Douglas, " If my liege

* May win yon walls by storm or siege,
Then were each brave and patriot heart
Kindled of new for loyal part."—

Answer'd Lord Ronald, " Not for shame
Would I that aged Torquil came,
And found, for all our empty boast,
Without a blow we fled the coast.

I will not credit that this land,
So famed for warlike heart and hand,
The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a truce."—

" Prove we our fate---the brunt we'll bide ! "

So Boyd and Hays and Lennox cried ;

So said, so vow'd, the leaders all ;

So Bruce resolved : " And in my hall
Since the bold Southern make their home,
The hour of payment soon shall come,
When with a rough and rugged host
Clifford may reckon to his cost.

Meantime, through well-known bosk and dell,
I'll lead where we may shelter well."

XVII.

Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight ?—
It ne'er was known¹—yet grey-hair'd eld
A superstitious credence held,
That never did a mortal hand
Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand ;

¹ See Note 22.

Nay, and that on the self-same night
When Bruce cross'd o'er, still gleams the light.
Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
And glittering wave and crimson'd shore—
But whether beam celestial, lent
By Heaven to aid the King's descent
Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
To lure him to defeat and death,
Or were it but some meteor strange,
Of such as oft through midnight range,
Startling the traveller late and lone,
I know not—and it ne'er was known.

XVIII.

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
And Ronald, to his promise true,
Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
To aid him on the rugged way.
“Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
Why throbs that silly heart of thine?”—
—That name the pirates to their slave
(In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling) gave—
“Dost thou not rest thee on my arm?
Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm?
Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
This targe for thee and me supplied?
Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
And, trembler, canst thou terror feel?
Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart;
From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part.”
—O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word, at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart's that broken!
Half sooth'd, half grieved, half terrified,
Close drew the page to Ronald's side;

A wild delirious thrill of joy
Was in that hour of agony,
As up the steepy pass he strove,
Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love !

XIX.

The barrier of that iron shore,
The rock's steep ledge, is now climb'd o'er ;
And from the castle's distant wall,
From tower to tower the warders call :
The sound swings over land and sea,
And marks a watchful enemy.—
They gain'd the Chase, a wide domain
Left for the Castle's silvan reign,
(Seek not the scene—the axe, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marr'd it now,) *
But then, soft swept in velvet green
The plain with many a glade between,
Whose tangled alleys far invade
The depth of the brown forest shade.
Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
Fair shelter for the sportive fawn ;
There, tufted close with copsewood green,
Was many a swelling hillock seen ;
And all around was verdure meet
For pressure of the fairies' feet.
The glossy holly loved the park,
The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
And many an old oak, worn and bare,
With all its shiver'd boughs, was there.
Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
On lawn and hillock, glade and dell.
The gallant Monarch sigh'd to see
These glades so loved in childhood free,

* See Note 23.

Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
He ranged beneath the forest bough.

XX.

Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they sped.
Well knew the band that measured tread,
When, in retreat or in advance.
The serried warriors move at once;
And evil were the luck, if dawn
Descried them on the open lawn.
Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
Strain up the bank and o'er the moss.
From the exhausted page's brow
Cold drops of toil are streaming now;
With effort faint and lengthen'd pause,
His weary step the stripling draws.
"Nay, droop not yet!" the warrior said;
"Come, let me give thee ease and aid!
Strong are mine arms, and little care
A weight so slight as thine to bear.—
What! wilt thou not?—capricious boy!—
Then thine own limbs and strength employ.
Pass but this night, and pass thy care,
I'll place thee with a lady fair,
Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
How Ronald loves fair Isabel!"
Worn out, dishearten'd, and dismay'd,
Here Amadine let go the plaid;
His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
He sunk among the midnight dews!

XXI.

What may be done?—the night is gone—
The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—

Eternal shame, if at the brunt
Lord Ronald grace not battle's front!—
“ See yonder oak, within whose trunk
Decay a darken'd cell hath sunk ;
Enter, and rest thee there a space,
Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face.
I will not be, believe me far ;
But must not quit the ranks of war.
Well will I mark the bosky bourn,
And soon, to guard thee hence, return.—
Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy !
But sleep in peace, and wake in joy.”
In silvan lodging close bestow'd,
He placed the page, and onward strode
With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
And soon the marching band o'ertook.

XXII.

Thus strangely left, long sobb'd and wept
The page, till, wearied out, he slept—
A rough voice waked his dream—“ Nay, here,
Here by this thicket, pass'd the deer—
Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
What have we here ?—a Scottish plaid,
And in its folds a stripling laid ?—
Come forth ! thy name and business tell !
What, silent ?—then I guess thee well,
The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,
Wafted from Arran yester morn—
Come, comrades, we will straight return.
Our Lord may choose the rack should teach
To this young lurcher use of speech.
Thy bow-string, till I bind him fast.”—
“ Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast ;
Unbound we'll lead him, fear it not ;
'Tis a fair stripling, though a Scott.”

The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII.

Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning sport ;
And now with Lorn held deep discourse,
Now gave command for hound and horse.
War-steeds and palfreys paw'd the ground,
And many a deer-dog howl'd around.
To Amadine, Lorn's well-known word
Replying to that Southern Lord,
Mix'd with this clanging din, might seem
The phantom of a fever'd dream.
The tone upon his ringing ears
Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
When in rude waves or roaring winds
Some words of woe the muser finds,
Until more loudly and more near,
Their speech arrests the page's ear.

XXIV.

"And was she thus," said Clifford, "lost?
The priest should rue it to his cost!
What says the monk?"—"The holy Sire
Owns, that in masquer's quaint attire,
She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
To all except to him alone.
But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
Laid them aboard that very morn,
And pirates seized her for their prey.
He proffer'd ransom-gold to pay,
And they agreed—but ere told o'er,
The winds blow loud, the billows roar ;
They sever'd, and they met no more.

He deems—such tempest vex'd the coast—
Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost.
So let it be, with the disgrace
And scandal of her lofty race !
Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
Than brought her infamy on Lorn ! ”

XXV.

Lord Clifford now the captive spied ;—
“ Whom, Herbert, hast thou there ? ” he cried.
“ A spy we seized within the Chase,
A hollow oak his lurking place.”—
“ What tidings can the youth afford ? ”
“ He plays the mute.”—“ Then noose a cord—
Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
For his plaid's sake.”—“ Clan-Colla's loom,”
Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
Rather the vesture than the face,
“ Clan-Colla's dames such tartans twine ;
Wearer nor plaid claims care of mine.
Give him, if my advice you crave,
His own scathed oak ; and let him wave
In air, unless, by terror wrung,
A frank confession find his tongue.—
Nor shall he die without his rite ;
—Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy breath,
As they convey him to his death.”—
“ O brother ! cruel to the last ! ”
Through the poor captive's bosom pass'd
The thought, but, to his purpose true,
He said not, though he sigh'd, “ Adieu ! ”

XXVI.

And will he keep his purpose still,
In sight of that last closing ill,

When one poor breath, one single word,
May freedom, safety, life, afford ?
Can he resist the instinctive call,
For life that bids us barter all ?—
Love, strong as death, his heart hath steel'd,
His nerves hath strung—he will not yield !
Since that poor breath, that little word,
May yield Lord Ronald to the sword.—
Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
The griesly headsman's by his side ;
Along the greenwood Chase they bend,
And now their march has ghastly end !
That old and shatter'd oak beneath,
They destine for the place of death.
—What thoughts are his, while all in vain
His eye for aid explores the plain ?
What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear,
He hears the death-prayer mutter'd near ?
And must he die such death accurst,
Or will that bosom-secret burst ?
Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
His trembling lips are livid blue ;
The agony of parting life
Has nought to match that moment's strife !

XXVII.

But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy !
Soon as the dire lament was play'd,
It waked the lurking ambuscade.
The Island Lord look'd forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,
“ By Heaven they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony !
They shall abide it ! ”—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, “ They shall not harm

A ringlet of the stripling's hair ;
But, till I give the word, forbear.
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their hold :
A spear above the copse display'd,
Be signal of the ambush made.
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate,
And, when you hear'st the battle-din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the port,
And man and guard the castle-court.—
The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest-tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see."

XXVIII.

Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compell'd to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood bough,
Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue.—
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
Sees the dark death-train moving by,
And heedful measures oft the space,
The Douglas and his band must trace,
Ere they can reach their destined ground.
Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
Now cluster round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and mutter'd prayer
The victim for his fate prepare.—

What glances o'er the greenwood shade ?
The spear that marks the ambuscade !—
“ Now, noble Chief ! I leave thee loose ;
Upon them, Ronald ! ” said the Bruce.

XXIX.

“ The Bruce, the Bruce ! ” to well-known cry
His native rocks and woods reply.
“ The Bruce, the Bruce ! ” in that dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was heard.
The astonish'd Southern gazed at first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst,
That waked in that presaging name.
Before, behind, around it came !
Half-arm'd, surprised, on every side
Hemm'd in, hew'd down, they bled and died.
Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
And fierce Clar-Colla's broadsword raged !
Full soon the few who fought were sped,
Nor better was their lot who fled,
And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
The Douglas's redoubted spear !
Two hundred yeomen on that morn
The castle left, and none return.

XXX.

Not on their flight press'd Ronald's brand,
A gentler duty claimed his hand.
He raised the page, where on the plain
His fear had sunk him with the slain :
And twice, that morn, surprise well near
Betray'd the secret kept by fear ;
Once, when, with life returning, came
To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name,
And hardly recollection drown'd
The accents in a murmuring sound ;

And once, when scarce he could resist
The Chieftain's care to loose the vest,
Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breast.
But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
For martial work was yet to do.

XXXI.

A harder task fierce Edward waits.
Ere signal given, the castle gates
His fury had assail'd ;
Such was his wonted reckless mood,
Yet desperate valour oft made good,
Even by its daring, venture rude,
Where prudence might have fail'd.
Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
And struck the iron chain in two,
By which its planks arose ;
The warder next his axe's edge
Struck down upon the threshold ledge,
'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge !
The gate they may not close.
Well fought the Southern in the fray,
Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
But stubborn Edward forced his way
Against a hundred foes.
Loud came the cry, " The Bruce, the Bruce ! "
No hope or in defence or truce,
Fresh combatants pour in ;
Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
They drive the struggling foe before,
And ward on ward they win.
Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
And limbs were lopp'd and life-blood pour'd,
The cry of death and conflict roar'd,
And fearful was the din !

The startling horses plunged and flung,
Clamour'd the dogs till turrets rung,
Nor sunk the fearful cry,
Till not a foeman was there found
Alive, save those who on the ground
Groan'd in their agony!

XXXII.

The valiant Clifford is no more ;¹
On Ronald's broadsword stream'd his gore.
But better hap had he of Lorn,
Who, by the foemen backward borne,
Yet gain'd with slender train the port,
Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
And cut the cable loose.
Short were his shrift in that debate,
That hour of fury and of fate,
If Lorn encounter'd Bruce !
Then long and loud the victor shout
From turret and from tower rung out,
The rugged vaults replied ;
And from the donjon tower on high,
The men of Carrick may descry
Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
Of silver, waving wide !

XXXIII.

The Bruce hath won his father's hall !²
—"Welcome, brave friends and comrades all,
Welcome to mirth and joy !
The first, the last, is welcome here,
From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,
To this poor speechless boy.

¹ In point of fact, Clifford fell at Bannockburn,
² See Note 24.

Great God ! once more my sire's abode
 Is mine—behold the floor I trode
 In tottering infancy !
 And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
 Echoed my joyous shout and bound
 In boyhood, and that rung around
 To youth's unthinking glee !
 O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
 'Then to my friends, my thanks be given !"—
 He paused a space, his brow he cross'd—
 Then on the board his sword he toss'd,
 Yet steaming hot ; with Southern gore
 From hilt to point 'twas crimson'd o'er.

XXXIV.

" Bring here," he said, " the mazers four,
 My noble fathers loved of yore. '¹
 Thrice let them circle round the board,
 The pledge, fair Scotland's rights restored !
 And he whose lip shall touch the wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at nought,
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot !
 Sit, gentle friends ! our hour of glee
 Is brief, we'll spend it joyously !
 Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,
 When betwixt storm and storm he gleams.
 Well is our country's work begun,
 But more, far more, must yet be done.
 Speed messengers the country through ;
 Arouse old friends, and gather new ;"²

¹ See Note 25.

² As soon as it was known in Kyle, says ancient tradition, that Robert Bruce had landed in Carrick, with the intention of recovering the crown of Scotland, the laird of Craigie, and forty-eight men in his immediate neigh-

Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
The fairest forms, the truest hearts !¹
Call all, call all ! from Redswair-Path,
To the wild confines of Cape-Wrath ;
Wide let the news through Scotland ring ;
The Northern Eagle claps his wing ! "

bourhood, declared in favour of their legitimate prince. Bruce granted them a tract of land, still retained by the freemen of Newton to this day. The original charter was lost when the pestilence was raging at Ayr ; but it was renewed by one of the Jameses, and is dated at Falkland. The freemen of Newton were formerly officers by rotation. The Provost of Ayr at one time was a freeman of Newton, and it happened to be his turn, while provost in Ayr, to be officer in Newton, both of which offices he discharged at the same time.

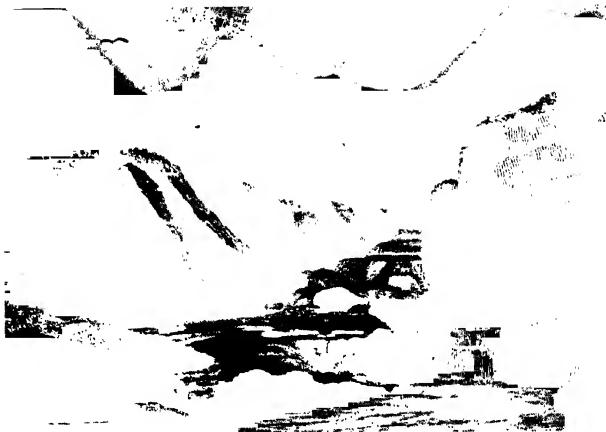
¹ The forest of Selkirk, or Ettrick, at this period, occupied all the district which retains that denomination, and embraced the neighbouring dales of Tweeddale, and at least the Upper Ward of Clydesdale. All that tract was probably as waste as it is mountainous, and covered with the remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest, which is supposed to have stretched from Cheviot Hills as far as Hamilton, and to have comprehended even a part of Ayrshire. At the fatal battle of Falkirk, Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, brother to the Steward of Scotland, commanded the archers of Selkirk Forest, who fell around the dead body of their leader. The English historians have commemorated the tall and stately persons, as well as the unswerving faith, of these foresters.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO SIXTH.

O who, that shared them, ever shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
When breathless in the mart the couriers met,
Early and late, at evening and at prime ;
When the loud cannon and the merry chime
Hail'd news on news, as field on field was won,
When hope, long doubtful, soar'd at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun !

O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears !
The heart-sick faintness of the hope delay'd,
The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears,
That track'd with terror twenty rolling years,
All was forgot in that blithe jubilee !
Her downcast eye even pale Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee,
That hail'd the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty !



GOATFELL OF ARRAN

O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride.

The Lord of the Isles, p. 109

From the drawing by Wm. Erans



CUMRAY

Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
Close the fair entrance of the Clyde.

*The Lord of the Isles, p. 114**

Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
 When 'gainst the lavade's turn'd the battle's scale.
 When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd
 O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale;¹
 When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale.²
 And fiery Edward routed stout St. John.³
 When Randolph's war cry swell'd the southern gale,⁴
 And many a fortress, town, and tower, was won,
 And Fame still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done.

II.

Blithe tidings flew from baron's tower,
 To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,

¹ The first important advantage gained by Bruce, after landing at Turnberry, was over Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, the same by whom he had been defeated near Methven. They met, as has been said, by appointment, at Loudonhill, in the west of Scotland. Pembroke sustained a defeat; and from that time Bruce was at the head of a considerable flying army. Yet he was subsequently obliged to retreat into Aberdeenshire, and was there assailed by Comyn, Earl of Buchan, desirous to avenge the death of his relative, the Red Comyn, and supported by a body of English troops under Philip de Moubray. Bruce was ill at the time of a scrofulous disorder, but took horse to meet his enemies, although obliged to be supported on either side. He was victorious, and it is said that the agitation of his spirits restored his health.

² See Note 26.

³ "John de St. John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots. By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timely received. The courage of Edward Bruce, approaching to temerity, frequently enabled him to achieve what men of more judicious valour would never have attempted. He ordered the infantry, and the meaner sort of his army, to intrench themselves in strong narrow ground. He himself, with fifty horsemen well harnessed, issued forth under cover of a thick mist, surprised the English on their march, attacked and dispersed them."—DALRYMPLE'S *Annals of Scotland*, quarto, *Edinburgh*, 1779, p. 25.

⁴ Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself. He espoused his uncle's party when Bruce first assumed the crown, and was made prisoner at the fatal battle of Methven, in which his relative's hopes appeared to be ruined. Randolph accordingly not only submitted to the English, but took an active part against Bruce, appeared in arms against him, and in the skirmish where he was so closely pursued by the bloodhound, it is said his nephew took his standard with his own hand. But Randolph was afterwards made prisoner by Douglas in Tweeddale, and brought before King Robert. Some harsh language was exchanged between the uncle and nephew, and the latter was committed for a time to close custody. Afterwards, however, they were reconciled, and Randolph was created Earl of Moray about 1312. After this period he eminently distinguished himself, first by the surprise of Edinburgh Castle, and afterwards by many similar enterprises, conducted with equal courage and ability.

And waked the solitary cell,
Where lone Saint Bride's recluses dwell.
Princess no more, fair Isabel,
 A vot'ress of the order now,
Say, did the rule that bid thee wear
Dim veil and woollen scapulare,
And reft thy locks of dark-brown hair,
 That stern and rigid vow,
Did it condemn the transport high,
Which glisten'd in thy watery eye,
When minstrel or when palmer told
Each fresh exploit of Bruce the bold?—
And whose the lovely form, that shares
Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers?
No sister she of convent shade;
So say these locks in lengthen'd braid,
So say the blushes and the sighs,
The tremors that unbidden rise,
When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
The brave Lord Ronald's praises came.

III.

Believe, his father's castle won,
And his bold enterprise begun,
That Bruce's earliest cares restore
The speechless page to Arran's shore:
Nor think that long the quaint disguise
Conceal'd her from a sister's eyes;
And sister-like in love they dwell
In that lone convent's silent cell.
There Bruce's slow assent allows
Fair Isabel the veil and vows;
And there, her sex's dress regain'd,
The lovely Maid of Lorn remain'd,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
Resounded with the din of war;

And many a month, and many a day,
In calm seclusion wore away.

IV.

These days, these months, to years had worn,
When tidings of high weight were borne
To that lone island's shore ;
Of all the Scottish conquests made
By the first Edward's ruthless blade,

His son retain'd no more,
Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
Beleaguer'd by King Robert's powers ;

And they took term of truce,¹
If England's King should not relieve
The siege ere John the Baptist's eve,
To yield them to the Bruce.

England was roused—on every side
Courier and post and herald bied,

To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege,²
Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
With buckler, brand, and spear.

The term was nigh—they muster'd fast,
By beacon and by bugle-blast

Forth marshall'd for the field ;

¹ When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling Castle continued to hold out. The care of the blockade was committed by the King to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with Sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not succoured by the King of England before St. John the Baptist's day. The King severely blamed his brother for the impolicy of a treaty, which gave time to the King of England to advance to the relief of the castle with all his assembled forces, and obliged himself either to meet them in battle with an inferior force or to retreat with dishonour. "Let all England come," answered the reckless Edward; "we will fight them were they more." The consequence was, of course, that each kingdom mustered its strength for the expected battle; and as the space agreed upon reached from Lent to Midsummer, full time was allowed for that purpose.

² There is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera* the summons issued upon this occasion to the sheriff of York; and he mentions eighteen other persons to whom similar ordinances were issued.

There rode each knight of noble name,
 There England's hardy archers came,
 The land they trode seem'd all on flame,
 With banner, blade, and shield !
 And not famed England's powers alone,
 Renown'd in arms, the summons own ;
 For Neustria's knights obey'd,
 Gasconne hath lent her horsemen good,
 And Cambria, but of late subdued,
 Sent forth her mountain-multitude.¹
 And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood
 Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
 Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.²

V.

Right to devoted Caledon
 The storm of war rolls slowly on,
 With menace deep and dread ;
 So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
 Suspend awhile the threaten'd shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head.

¹ Edward the First, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welsh, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them. But this policy was not without its risks. Previous to the battle of Falkirk, the Welsh quarrelled with the English men-at-arms, and after bloodshed on both parts, separated themselves from his army, and the feud between them, at so dangerous and critical a juncture, was reconciled with difficulty. Edward II. followed his father's example in this particular, and with no better success. They could not be brought to exert themselves in the cause of their conquerors. But they had an indifferent reward for their forbearance. Without arms, and clad only in scanty dresses of linen cloth, they appeared naked in the eyes even of the Scottish peasantry ; and after the rout at Bannockburn, were massacred by them in great numbers, as they retired in confusion towards their own country. They were under command of Sir Maurice de Berkeley.

² There is in the *Fœdera* an invitation to Eth O'Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race. These auxiliaries were to be commanded by Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster. Similar mandates were issued to other twenty-five Irish chiefs.

Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
King Robert mark'd the tempest nigh !
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
His royal summons warn'd the land,
That all who own'd their King's command
Should instant take the spear and brand,
 To combat at his side.
O who may tell the sons of fame,
That at King Robert's bidding came,
 To battle for the right !
From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-Moss,
 All boun'd them for the fight.
Such news the royal courier tells
Who came to rouse dark Arran's dells ;
But farther tidings must the ear
Of Isabel in secret hear.
These in her cloister walk, next morn,
Thus shared she with the Maid of Lorn.

VI.

“ My Edith, can I tell how dear
Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel ?—
Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
When I must say the words, We part !
 The cheerless convent-cell
Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee ;
Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes fell.
Nor, Edith, judge thyself betray'd,
Though Robert knows that Lorn's high Maid
And his poor silent page were one.
Versed in the fickle heart of man,
Earnest and anxious hath he look'd
How Ronald's heart the message brook'd

That gave him, with her last farewell,
The charge of Sister Isabel,
To think upon thy better right,
And keep the faith his promise plight.
Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
At first if vain repinings wake—

Long since that mood is gone :
Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
And oft his breach of faith he blames—
Forgive him for thine own ! ”—

VII.

“ No ! never to Lord Ronald's bower
Will I again as paramour ”——
“ Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
Until my final tale be said !—
The good King Robert would engage
Edith once more his elfin page,
By her own heart and her own eye,
Her lover's penitence to try—
Safe in his royal charge, and free,
Should such thy final purpose be,
Again unknown to seek the cell,
And live and die with Isabel.”
Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's eye
Might have some glance of policy ;
Dunstaffnage had the monarch ta'en,
And Lorn had own'd King Robert's reign ;
Her brother had to England fled,
And there in banishment was dead ;
Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
O'er tower and land was Edith's right ;
This ample right o'er tower and land
Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand.

VIII.

Embarrass'd eye and blushing cheek
Pleasure and shame, and fear bespeak
Yet much the reasoning Edith made :
" Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
In council to another's ear.
Why should she leave the peaceful cell ?—
How should she part with Isabel ?—
How wear that strange attire again ?—
How risk herself 'midst martial men ?—
And how be guarded on the way ?—
At least she might entreat delay."
Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
Reluctant to be thought to move
At the first call of truant love.

IX.

Oh, blame her not !—when zephyrs wake,
The aspen's trembling leaves must shake ;
When beams the sun through April's shower,
It needs must bloom, the violet flower ;
And Love, howe'er the maiden strive,
Must with reviving hope revive !
A thousand soft excuses came,
To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame.
Pledged by their sires in earliest youth,
He had her plighted faith and truth—
Then, 'twas her Liege's strict command,
And she, beneath his royal hand,
A ward in person and in land :—
And, last, she was resolved to stay
Only brief space—one little day—

Close hidden in her safe disguise
From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
But once to see him more!—nor blame
Her wish—to hear him name her name!—
Then, to bear back to solitude
The thought, he had his falsehood rued!
But Isabel, who long had seen
Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
And well herself the cause might know,
Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
Joy'd, generous, that revolving time
Gave means to expiate the crime.
High glow'd her bosom as she said,
"Well shall her sufferings be repaid!"
Now came the parting hour—a band
From Arran's mountains left the land;
Their chief, Fitz-Louis, had the care
The speechless Annadine to bear
To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
To page the monarch dearly loved.

X.

The king had deem'd the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay:
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn-corn.
In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.¹
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;

¹ See Note 27.

And three, advanced, form'd vaward-line,
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.
Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.
Beyond, the Southern host appears,¹
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye,
Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam ;
And where the heaven join'd with the hill.
Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost.

XI.

Down from the hill the maiden pass'd,
At the wild show of war aghast ;
And traversed first the rearward host,
Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
Lennox and Lanark too, were there,
And all the western land ;
With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains rank'd their files,²
In many a plaided band.
There, in the centre, proudly raised,
The Bruce's royal standard blazed,

¹ Upon the 23rd June, 1314, the alarm reached the Scottish army of the approach of the enemy. Douglas and the Marshal were sent to reconnoitre with a body of cavalry. The two Scottish commanders were cautious in the account which they brought back to their camp. To the king in private they told the formidable state of the enemy ; but in public reported that the English were indeed a numerous host, but ill commanded and worse disciplined.

² The men of Argyre, the islanders, and the Highlanders in general, were ranked in the rear. They must have been numerous, for Bruce had reconciled himself with almost all their chieftains, excepting the obnoxious MacDougals of Torm.

And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.
A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate array'd,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn ;
But O ! unseen for three long years,
Dear was the garb of mountaineers
To the fair maid of Lorn !
For one she look'd,—but he was far
Busied amid the ranks of war—
Yet with affection's troubled eye
She marked his banner boldly fly,
Gave on the countless foe a glance,
And thought on battle's desperate chance.

XII.

To centre of the vaward line
Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
Arm'd all on foot, that host appears
A serried mass of glimmering spears.
There stood the Marchers' warlike band,
The warriors there of Lodon's land ;
Ettrick and Liddell bent the yew,
A band of archers fierce, though few ;
The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
And the bold Spears of Teviotdale ;—
The dauntless Douglas these obey,
And the young Stuart's gentle sway.
North-eastward by Saint Ninian's shrine,
Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine
The warriors whom the hardy North
From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.
The rest of Scotland's war-array
With Edward Bruce to westward lay,

Where Bannock, with his broken bank
And deep ravine, protects their flank.
Behind them, screen'd by sheltering wood,
The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal, stood :
His men-at-arms bear mace and lance,
And plumes that wave, and helmet that glance.
Thus fair divided by the King,
Centre, and right, and left-ward wing,
Composed his front ; nor distant far
Was strong reserve to aid the war.
And 'twas to front of this array,
Her guide and Edith made their way.

XIII.

Here must they pause ; for, in advance
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The Monarch rode along the van,¹
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
Alone he rode—from head to heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel ;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet,

¹ The English vanguard, commanded by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, came in sight of the Scottish army upon the evening of the 23rd of June. Bruce was then riding upon a little palfrey, in front of his foremost line, putting his host in order. It was then that the personal encounter took place betwixt him and Sir Henry de Bohun, a valiant English knight, the issue of which had a great effect upon the spirits of both armies. The Scottish leaders remonstrated with the King upon his temerity. He only answered, "I have broken my good battle-axe."—The English vanguard retreated after witnessing this single combat. Probably their generals did not think it advisable to hazard an attack, while its unfavourable issue remained upon their minds.

And clasp'd within its glittering twine
Was seen the glove of Argentine ;
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host.—Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night
Should view the strife, or dawning light.

XIV.

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,
Was that bright battle-front ! for there
Rode England's King and peers :
And who, that saw that monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell !—
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flash'd at sight of shield and lance.
" Know'st thou," he said, " De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line ?"—
" The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege : I know him well."—
" And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave ?"—
" So please my Liege," said Argentine,
" Were he but horsed on steed like mine,

To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure 'orth my lance.'—
“In battle-day,” the King replied,
“Nice tourney rules are set aside.
—Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him—sweep him from our path!”
And, at King Edward's signal, soon
Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boune.

XV.

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renowned for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.
—As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast.—Each breast beat high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse canæ!
The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
But, swerving from the Knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear.
Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course—but soon his course was o'er!—
High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!—
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;

The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
Springs from the blow the startled horse,
Drops to the plain the lifeless corse ;
—First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune !

XVI.

One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead ;
Then gently turn'd his palfry's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gain'd his own array.
There round their King the leaders crowd,
And blame his recklessness aloud,
That risk'd 'gainst each adventurous spear
A life so valued and so dear.
His broken weapon's shaft survey'd
The King, and careless answer made,—
“ My loss may pay my folly's tax ;
I've broke my trusty battle-axe.”
'Twas then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
Did Isabel's commission show ;
Edith, disguised, at distance stands,
And hides her blushes with her hands.
The monarch's brow has changed its line,
Away the gory axe he throw,
While to the seeming page he drow,
Clearing war's terrors from his eye.
Her hand with gentle ease he took,
With such a kind protecting look,
As to a weak and timid boy
Might speak, that elder brother's care
And elder brother's love were there.

XVII.

"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"
Then whisper'd, "Still that name be thine.
Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
And sends thee here in doubtful hour
But soon we are beyond her power;
For on this chosen battle-plain,
Victor or vanquish'd, I remain.
Do thou to yonder hill repair;
The followers of our host are there,
And all who may not weapons bear.—
Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care.—
Joyful we meet, if all go well;
If not, in Arran's holy cell
Thou must take part with Isabel;
For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath sworn,
Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,
(The bliss on earth he covets most,)
Would he forsake his battle-post,
Or shun the fortune that may fall
To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all.—
But, hark! some news these trumpets tell;
Forgive my haste—farewell—farewell."—
And in a lower voice he said,
"Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"—

XVIII.

"What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
Our leftward flank?"—the Monarch cried,
To Moray's Earl who rode beside.
"Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
Randolph, thy wreath has lost a rose."

¹ See Note 23.

The Earl his visor closed, and said,
"My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade.-
Follow, my household!"—And they go
Like lightning on the advancing foe.
"My Liege," said noble Douglas then,
"Earl Randolph has but one to ten :
Let me go forth his band to aid!"—
—"Stir not. The error he hath made,
Let him amend it as he may ;
I will not weaken mine array."
Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
And Douglas's brave heart swell'd high,—
"My Liege," he said, "with patient ear
I must not Moray's death-knell hear!"—
"Then go—but speed thee back again."—
Forth sprung the Douglas with his train :
But, when they won a rising hill,
He bade his followers hold them still.—
"See, see! the routed Southern fly!
The Earl hath won the victory.
Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
His banner towers above the press.
Rein up; our presence would impair
The fame we come too late to share."
Back to the host the Douglas rode,
And soon glad tidings are abroad,
That Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,
His followers fled with loosen'd rein.—
That skirmish closed the busy day,
And couch'd in battle's prompt array,
Each army on their weapons lay.

XIX.

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
Demayet smiled beneath her ray;

Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
And, twined in liuks of silver bright,
Her winding river lay.
Ah, gentle planet ! other sight
Shall greet thee, next returning night,
Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human gore,
And piles of slaughter'd men and horse,
And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
And many a wounded wretch to plain
Beneath thy silver light in vain !
But now, from England's host, the cry
Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass
The murmur'd prayer, the early mass !—
Here, numbers had presumption given ;
There, bands o'er-matched sought aid from Heaven.

XX.

On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands,
The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.
O ! with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky !—
Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun ;
Is it the lark that carols shrill,
Is it the bittern's early hum ?
No !—distant, but increasing still,
The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,
With the deep murmur of the drum.
Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were toss'd,¹

¹ There is an old tradition, that the well-known Scottish tune of "Hey, tutti taitti," was Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn. The late Mr.

His breast and brow each soldier cross'd,
 And started from the ground ;
 Arm'd and array'd for instant fight,
 Rose archer, spearman, squire and knight,
 And in the pomp of battle bright
 The dread battalia frown'd.

XXI.

Now onward, and in open view,
 The countless ranks of England drew,^{*}
 Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
 When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
 And his deep roar sends challenge wide
 To all that bars his way !
 In front the gallant archers trode,
 The men-at-arms behind them rode,
 And midmost of the phalanx broad
 The Monarch held his sway.
 Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
 Around him waves a sea of plumes,
 Where many a knight in battle known,
 And some who spurs had first braced on,
 And deem'd that fight should see them won,
 King Edward's hests obey.

Ritson, no grantor of propositions, doubts whether the Scots had any martial music, quotes Froissart's account of each soldier in the host bearing a little horn, on which, at the onset, they would make such a horrible noise, as if all the devils of hell had been among them. He observes, that these horns are the only music mentioned by Barbour, and concludes, that it must remain a moot point whether Bruce's army were cheered by the sound even of a solitary bagpipe.—*Historical Essay prefixed to Ritson's Scottish Songs.* It may be observed in passing, that the Scottish of this period certainly observed some musical cadence, even in winding their horns, since Bruce was at once recognized by his followers from his mode of blowing. But the tradition, true or false, has been the means of securing to Scotland one of the finest lyrics in the language, the celebrated war-song of Burns,—“Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled.”

¹ Upon the 24th of June, the English army advanced to the attack. The narrowness of the Scottish front, and the nature of the ground, did not permit them to have the full advantage of their numbers, nor is it very easy to find out what was their proposed order of battle. The vanguard, however, appeared a distinct body, consisting of archers and spearmen on foot, and commanded, as already said, by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford.

De Argentine attends his side,
 With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride,
 Selected champions from the train,
 To wait upon his bridle-rein.
 Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
 —At once, before his sight amazed,
 Sunk banner, spear, and shield :
 Each weapon-point is downward sent,
 Each warrior to the ground is bent.
 "The rebels, Argentine, repent !
 For pardon they have kneel'd."—
 "Aye !—but they bend to other powers,
 And other pardon sue than ours !
 See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
 And blesses them with lifted hands !¹
 Upon the spot where they have kneel'd,
 These men will die, or win the field."—
 —"Then prove we if they die or win !
 Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin."

XXII. ¹

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
 Just as the Northern ranks arose,
 Signal for England's archery
 To halt and bend their bows.
 Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a pace,
 Glauced at the intervening space,
 And raised his left hand high ;
 To the right ear the cords they bring—
 —At once ten thousand bow-strings ring,
 Ten thousand arrows fly !

¹ "Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front, bare-footed, and bearing a crucifix in his hands, and exhorting the Scots in few and forcible words, to combat for their rights and their liberty. The Scots kneeled down. 'They yield,' cried Edward ; 'see, they implore mercy.'—'They do,' answered Ingelram de Umfraville, 'but not ours. On that field they will be victorious or die.'"—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 47.

Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot ;
 As fiercely and as fast,
Forth whistling came the grey-goose wing
As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
 Adown December's blast.
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide ;
Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride,
 If the fell shower may last !
Upon the right, behind the wood,
Each by his steed dismounted, stood
 The Scottish chivalry ;—
—With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
His own keen heart, his eager train,
Until the archers gain'd the plain ;
 Then, " Mount, ye gallants free ! "
He cried ; and, vaulting from the ground,
His saddle every horseman found.
On high their glittering crests they toss,
As springs the wild-fire from the moss ;
The shield hangs down on every breast,
Each ready lance is in the rest,
 And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
" Forth, Marshal, on the peasant foe !
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
 And cut the bow-string loose ! " ¹

XXIII.

Then spurs were dash'd in chargers' flanks,
They rush'd among the archer ranks.
No spears were there the shock to let,
No stakes to turn the charge were set,

¹ See Note 29.

And how shall yeoman's armour slight
 Stand the long lance and mace of might ?
 Or what may their short swords avail,
 'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail ?
 Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
 High o'er their heads the weapons swung.
 And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
 Give note of triumph and of rout !
 Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
 Their English hearts the strife made good
 Borne down at length on every side,
 Compell'd to flight they scatter wide.—
 Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
 And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee !
 The broken bows of Bannock's shore
 Shall in the greenwood ring no more !
 Round Wakefeld's merry may-pole now,
 The maids may twine the summer bough,
 May northward look with longing glance,
 For those that wont to lead the dance,
 For the blithe archers look in vain !
 Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
 Pierced through, trod down, by thousands slain,
 They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXIV.

The King with scorn beheld their flight.
 "Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight ?
 Each braggart churl could boast before,
 Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore !¹

¹ Roger Ascham quotes a similar Scottish proverb, "whereby they give the whole praise of shooting honestly to Englishmen, saying thus, 'that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scottes.'"—*Works of Ascham, edited by Bennet*, 4to, p. 110.

It is said, I trust incorrectly, by an ancient English historian, that the "good Lord James of Douglas" dreaded the superiority of the English archers so much, that when he made any of them prisoner, he gave him the option of losing the forefinger of his right hand, or his right eye, either species of mutilation rendering him incapable to use the bow. I have mislaid the reference to this singular passage.

Fitter to plunder chase or park,
 Than make a manly foe their mark.—
 Forward, each gentleman and knight !
 Let gentle blood show generous might,
 And chivalry redeem the fight ! ”

To rightward of the wild affray,
 The field show'd fair and level way ;

But in mid-space, the Bruce's care
 Had bored the ground with many a pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden yet,

That form'd a ghastly snare.

Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
 With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,

They panted for the shock !

With blazing crests and banners spread,
 The trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
 The wide plain thunder'd to their tread,

As far as Stirling rock.

Down ! down ! in headlong overthrow,
 Horseman and horse, the foremost go, ¹

Wild floundering on the field !

The first are in destruction's gorge,
 Their followers wildly o'er them urge ;—

The knightly helm and shield,

The mail, the acorn, and the spear,

Strong hand, high heart, are useless here !

Loud from the mass confused the cry

Of dying warriors swells on high,

And steeds that shriek in agony ! ²

¹ It is generally alleged by historians, that the English men-at-arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them. Barbour does not mention the circumstance. According to his account, Randolph, seeing the slaughter made by the cavalry on the right wing among the archers, advanced courageously against the main body of the English, and entered into close combat with them. Douglas and Stuart, who commanded the Scottish centre, led their division also to the charge, and the battle becoming general along the whole line, was obstinately maintained on both sides for a long space of time ; the Scottish archers doing great execution among the English men-at-arms, after the bowmen of England were dispersed.

² I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note ; and,

They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed ;
They broke like that same torrent's wave,
When swallow'd by a darksome cave.
Billows on billows burst and boil,
Maintaining still the stern turmoil.
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own !

XXV.

Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight.
Her noblest all are here ;
Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
Brought up the rearward battle-line.
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,

indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage, may be permitted to doubt, that, in moments of sudden or intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry. Lord Erskine, in a speech made in the House of Lords, upon a bill for enforcing humanity towards animals, noticed this remarkable fact, in language which I will not mutilate by attempting to repeat it. It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream, which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard.

Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes met,
And, closing dark on every side,
Raged the full contest far and wide.
Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
And well did Stewart's actions grace
The sire of Scotland's royal race !
Firmly they kept their ground ;
As firmly England onward press'd,
And down went many a noble crest,
And rent was many a valiant breast,
And Slaughter revell'd round.

XXVI.

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met ;
The groans of those who fell
Were drown'd amid the shriller clang,
That from the blades and harness rang,
And in the battle-yell.
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
Both Southern fierce and hardy Scot ;
And O ! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife !
The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
The Patriot for his country's claim ;
This Knight his youthful strength to prove,
And that to win his lady's love ;
Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
From habit some, or hardihood.
But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
The noble and the slave,
From various cause the same wild road,
On the same bloody morning, trode,
To that dark inn, the Grave

XXVII.

The tug of strife to flag begins,
Though neither loses yet nor wins.
High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
And feebler speeds the blow and thrust.
Douglas leans on his war-sword now,
And Randelph wipes his bloody brow ;
Nor less had toil'd each Southern knight,
From morn till mid-day in the fight.
Strong Egremont for air must gasp,
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere !
The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
Hath lost its lively tone ;
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter heard,
" My merry-men, fight on ! "

XXVIII.

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy.
" One effort more, and Scotland's free !
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock ;
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge ;
Now, forward to the shock ! "

¹ When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time, Bruce made a decisive movement, by bringing up the Scottish reserve. It is traditionally said, that at this crisis, he addressed the Lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, " My trust is constant in thee." Barbour intimates, that the reserve " assembled on one field," that is, on the same line with the Scottish forces already engaged ; which leads Lord Hailes to conjecture that the Scottish ranks must have been much thinned by slaughter, since, in that circumscribed ground, there was room for the reserve to fall into the line. But the advance of the Scottish cavalry must have contributed a good deal to form the vacancy occupied by the reserve.

At once the spears were forward thrown,
 Against the sun the broadswords shone ;
 The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
 And loud King Robert's voice was known—
 " Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail !
 Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
 The foe is fainting fast !
 Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
 For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
 The battle cannot last ! ”

XXIX.

The fresh and desperate onset bore
 The foes three furlongs back and more,
 Leaving their noblest in their gore.
 Alone, De Argentine
 Yet bears on high his red-cross shield,
 Gathers the relics of the field,
 Renews the ranks where they have reel'd,
 And still makes good the line.
 Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise,
 A bright but momentary blaze.
 Fair Edith heard the Southern shout,
 Beheld them turning from the rout,
 Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
 In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.
 That rallying force, combined anew,
 Appear'd in her distracted view,
 To hem the Islesmen round ;
 “ O God ! the combat they renew,
 And is no rescue found !
 And ye that look thus tamely on,
 And see your native land o'erthrown,
 O ! are your hearts of flesh or stone ? ”

XXX.

The multitude that watch'd afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,
Bondsman and serf; even female hand
Stretch'd to the hatchet or the brand;

But, when mute Amadine they heard
Give to their zeal his signal-word,

A frenzy fired the throng;

"Portents and miracles impeach

Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—

And he that gives the mute his speech,

Can bid the weak be strong.

To us, as to our lords, are given

A native earth, a promised heaven;

To us, as to our lords, belongs

The vengeance for our nation's wrongs;

The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warns

Our breast as theirs—To arms, to arms!"

To arms they flew—axe, club, or spear—

And mimic ensigns high they rear,¹

And, like a banner'd host afar,

Bear down on England's wearied war.

XXXI.

Already scatter'd o'er the plain,

Reproof, command, and counsel vain,

The rearward squadrons fled amain,

Or made but doubtful stay;—

But when they mark'd the seeming show

Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd foe,

The boldest broke array.

¹ See Note 80.

O give their hapless prince his due !¹

In vain the royal Edward threw

His person 'mid the spears,
Cried "Fight !" to terror and despair,
Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,

And cursed their caitiff fears ;
Till Pembroke turned his bridle rein,
And forced him from the fatal plain.
With them rode Argentine, until
They gain'd the summit of the hill,
But quitted there the train :—

"In yonder field a gage I left,—
I must not live of fame bereft ;

I needs must turn again.
Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
I know his banner well.

God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
And many a happier field than this !—
Once more, my Liege, farewell."

XXXII.

Again he faced the battle-field,—
Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
"Now then," he said, and couch'd his spear,
"My course is run, the goal is near ;
One effort more, one brave career,
Must close this race of mine."

Then in his stirrups rising high,
He shouted loud his battle-cry,
"Saint James for Argentine !"

And, of the bold pursuers, four
The gallant knight from saddle bore ,

¹ See Note 31.

But not unharm'd—a lance's point
Has found his breast-plate's loosen'd joint,
An axe has razed his crest ;
Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
Who press'd the chase with gory sword,
He rode with spear in rest,
And through his bloody tartans bored,
And through his gallant breast.
Nail'd to the earth, the mountaineer
Yet writhed him up against the spear,
And swung his broadsword round !
—Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way,
Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
The blood gush'd from the wound ;
And the grim Lord of Colonsay
Hath turn'd him on the ground,
And laugh'd in death-pang, that his blade
The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII.

Now toil'd the Bruce, the battle done,
To use his conquest boldly won ;
And gave command for horse and spear
To press the Southern's scatter'd rear,
Nor let his broken force combine,
—When the war-cry of Argentine
Fell faintly on his ear ;
“ Save, save his life,” he cried, “ O save
The kind, the noble, and the brave ! ”
The squadrons round free passage gave,
The wounded knight drew near ;
He raised his red-cross shield no more,
Helm, cuish, and breastplate stream'd with gore,
Yet, as he saw the King advance,
He strove even then to couch his lance—
The effort was in vain !

The spur-stroke fail'd to rouse the horse ;
Wounded and weary, in mid course

He stumbled on the plain.

Then foremost was the generous Bruce
To raise his head, his helm to loose ;—

“ Lord Earl, the day is thine !

My Sovereign's charge, and adverse fate,
Have made our meeting all too late :

Yet this may Argentine,

As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
A Christian's mass, a soldier's grave.”

XXXIV.

Bruce press'd his dying hand—its grasp
Kindly replied ; but, in his clasp,

It stiffen'd and grew cold—

“ And, O farewell ! ” the victor cried,

“ Of chivalry the flower and pride,

The arm in battle bold,

The courteous mien, the noble race,

The stainless faith, the manly face !—

Bid Ninian's convent light their shrine,

For late-wake of De Argentine.

O'er better knight on death-bier laid,

Torch never glean'd nor mass was said ! ”

XXXV.

Nor for De Argentine alone,

Through Ninian's church these torches shone,

And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.¹

That yellow lustre glimmer'd pale,

On broken plate and bloodied mail,

Rent crest and shatter'd coronet,

Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret ;

And the best names that England knew,
Claim'd in the death-prayer dismal due.

Yet mourn not, Land of Fame!
Though ne'er the leopards on thy shield
Retreated from so sad a field,

Since Norman William came.
Oft may thine annals justly boast
Of battles stern by Scotland lost;
Grudge not her victory,
When for her freeborn rights she strove;
Rights dear to all who freedom love,
To none so dear as thee!

XXXVI.

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear;
With him, a hundred voices tell
Of prodigy and miracle,

“For the mute page had spoke.”—

“Page!” said Fitz-Louis, “rather say,
An angel sent from realms of day,
To burst the English yoke.

I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
When hurrying from the mountain top;
A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
A step as light upon the green,
As if his pinions waved unseen;”—
“Spoke he with none?”—“With none—one word
Burst when he saw the Island Lord,
Returning from the battle-field.”—
“What answer made the Chief?”—“He kneel'd,
Durst not look up, but mutter'd low,
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere.”

XXXVII.

Even upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heap'd then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor monarch's musings high,
Mirth laughed in good King Robert's eye.
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneel'd to him?" he said,
"Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambuskenneth straight ye pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay for high deliverance given,
A nation's thanks to gracious Heaven.
Let him array, besides, such state,
As should on princes' nuptials wait.
Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The bridal of the Maid of Lorn."

"*To Mr. James Ballantyne.*—Dear Sir,—You have now the whole affair, excepting two or three concluding stanzas. As your taste for bride's cake may induce you to desire to know more of the wedding, I will save you some criticism by saying, I have settled to stop short as above.—Witness my hand,

"W. S."



THE DEATH-BIER OF DE ARGENTINE

Bed Ninian's convent light their shrine, for late-wake of De Argentine.
O'er better knight on death-bier laid, torch never gleam'd nor mass was said!

*The Lord of the Isles, p. 162**

From the drawing by J. H. Nixon

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

Thy rugged halls, Artornish ! rung.—P. 12.

THE ruins of the Castle of Artornish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the Sound of Mull, a name given to the deep arm of the sea, which divides that island from the continent. The situation is wild and romantic in the highest degree, having on the one hand a high and precipitous chain of rocks overhanging the sea, and on the other the narrow entrance to the beautiful salt-water lake, called Loch Alline, which is in many places finely fringed with copsewood. The ruins of Artornish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences. But, in former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds which the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire. Here they assembled what popular tradition calls their parliaments, meaning, I suppose, their *cour pléniere*, or assembly of feudal and patriarchal vassals and dependents. From this Castle of Artornish, upon the 19th day of October, 1461, John de Yle, designing himself Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, granted, in the style of an independent sovereign, a commission to his trusty and well-beloved cousins, Ronald of the Isles, and Duncan, Arch-Dean of the Isles, for empowering them to enter into a treaty with the most excellent Prince Edward, by the grace of God, King of France and England, and Lord of Ireland. Edward IV., on his part, named Laurence, Bishop of Durham, the Earl of Worcester, the Prior

of St. John's, Lord Wenlock, and Mr. Robert Stillington, keeper of the privy seal, his deputies and commissioners, to confer with those named by the Lord of the Isles. The conference terminated in a treaty, by which the Lord of the Isles agreed to become a vassal to the crown of England, and to assist Edward IV. and James Earl of Douglas, then in banishment, in subduing the realm of Scotland.

The first article provides, that John de Isle, Earl of Ross, with his son Donald Balloch, and his grandson John de Isle, with all their subjects, men, people, and inhabitants, become vassals and liegemen to Edward IV. of England, and assist him in his wars in Scotland or Ireland; and then follow the allowances to be made to the Lord of the Isles, in recompense of his military service, and the provisions for dividing such conquests as their united arms should make upon the mainland of Scotland among the confederates.

But it does not appear that the allies ever made any very active effort to realize their ambitious designs. It will serve to show both the power of these reguli, and their independence upon the crown of Scotland.

It is only farther necessary to say of the Castle of Artornish, that it is almost opposite to the Bay of Aros, in the Island of Mull, where there was another castle, the occasional residence of the Lord of the Isles.

NOTE 2.

O'erlooked dark Mull, thy mighty Sound.—P. 16.

The Sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Sailing from Oban to Aros, or Tobermory, through a narrow channel, yet deep enough to bear vessels of the largest burden, he has on his left the bold and mountainous shores of Mull; on the right those of that district of Argyleshire, called Morven, or Morvern, successively indented by deep salt-water lochs, running up many miles inland. To the south-eastward arise a prodigious range of mountains, among which Cruachan Ben is pre-eminent. And to the north-east is the no less huge and picturesque range of the Ardnamurchan hills. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene. Those of Donolly and Dunstaffnage are first passed, then that of Duart, formerly belonging to the chief of the warlike and powerful sept of Macleans, and the scene of Miss Baillie's beautiful tragedy, entitled the Family Legend. Still

passing on to the northward, Artornish and Aros become visible upon the opposite shores, and, lastly, Mingarry, and other ruins of less distinguished note. In fine weather, a grander and more impressive scene, both from its natural beauties, and associations with ancient history and tradition, can hardly be imagined. When the weather is rough, the passage is both difficult and dangerous, from the narrowness of the channel, and in part from the number of inland lakes, out of which sally forth a number of conflicting and thwarting tides, making the navigation perilous to open boats. The sudden flaws and gusts of wind which issue without a moment's warning from the mountain glens, are equally formidable. So that in unsettled weather, a stranger, if not much accustomed to the sea, may sometimes add to the other sublime sensations excited by the scene, that feeling of dignity which arises from a sense of danger. [Thanks to the introduction of a fine fleet of coasting steamers the visitor need now have little fear of the dangers pointed out by the author.]

NOTE 3.

*From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
To the green Ilay's fertile shore.*—P. 16.

The number of the western isles of Scotland exceeds two hundred, of which St. Kilda is the most northerly, anciently called Hirth, or Hirt, probably from "earth," being in fact the whole globe to its inhabitants. Ilay was in ancient times the principal abode of the Lords of the Isles, being, if not the largest, the most important island of their archipelago. In Martin's time, some relics of their grandeur were yet extant. "Loch-Finlagan, about three miles in circumference, affords salmon, trouts, and eels: this lake lies in the centre of the isle. The Isle Finlagan, from which this lake hath its name, is in it. It's famous for being once the court in which the great Mac-Donald, King of the Isles, had his residence; his houses, chapel, &c., are now ruinous. His guards de corps, called Lucht-tach, kept guard on the lakeside nearest to the isle; the walls of their houses are still to be seen there. The high court of judicature, consisting of fourteen, sat always here; and there was an appeal to them from all the courts in the isles: the eleventh share of the sum in debate was due to the principal judge. There was a big stone of seven foot square, in which there was a deep impression made to receive the feet of Mac-Donald; for he was crowned King of the Isles standing in this

stone, and swore that he would continue his vassals in the possession of their lands, and do exact justice to all his subjects : and then his father's sword was put into his hand. The Bishop of Argyle and seven priests anointed him king, in presence of all the heads of the tribes in the isles and continent, and were his vassals ; at which time the orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors," &c.—*MARTIN's Account of the Western Isles*, 8vo, London, 1716, p. 240, 1.

NOTE 4.

———*Mingarry sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste.*—P. 16.

The Castle of Mingarry is situated on the sea-coast of the district of Airdnamurchan. The ruins, which are tolerably entire, are surrounded by a very high wall, forming a kind of polygon, for the purpose of adapting itself to the projecting angles of a precipice overhanging the sea, on which the castle stands. It was anciently the residence of the Mac-Ians, a clan of Mac-Donalds, descended from Ian, or John, a grandson of Angus Og, Lord of the Isles. The last time that Mingarry was of military importance, occurs in the celebrated *Leabhar dearg*, or Red-book of Clanronald, a MS. renowned in the Ossianic controversy. Allaster Mac-Donald, commonly called Colquitto, who commanded the Irish auxiliaries, sent over by the Earl of Antrim during the great civil war to the assistance of Montrose, began his enterprise in 1644, by taking the castles of Kinloch-Aline, and Mingarry, the last of which made considerable resistance, as might, from the strength of the situation, be expected. In the meanwhile, Allaster Mac-Donald's ships, which had brought him over, were attacked in Loch Eisdor, in Skye, by an armament sent round by the covenanting parliament, and his own vessel was taken. This circumstance is said chiefly to have induced him to continue in Scotland, where there seemed little prospect of raising an army in behalf of the king. He had no sooner moved eastward to join Montrose, a junction which he effected in the braes of Athole, than the Marquis of Argyle besieged the castle of Mingarry, but without success. Among other warriors and chiefs whom Argyle summoned to his camp to assist upon this occasion, was John of Moidart, the Captain of Clanronald. Clanronald appeared ; but, far from yielding effectual assistance to Argyle, he took the opportunity of being in arms to lay waste the district of Sunart, then belonging to the adherents of Argyle, and sent part of the spoil to relieve the Castle of Mingarry. Thus the

castle was maintained until relieved by Allaster Mac-Donald (Colquitto), who had been detached for the purpose by Montrose. These particulars are hardly worth mentioning, were they not connected with the memorable successes of Montrose, related by an eye-witness and hitherto unknown to Scottish historians.

NOTE 5.

The heir of mighty Somerled.—P. 17.

Somerled was thane of Argyle and Lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century. He seems to have exercised his authority in both capacities, independent of the crown of Scotland, against which he often stood in hostility. He made various incursions upon the western lowlands during the reign of Malcolm IV., and seems to have made peace with him upon the terms of an independent prince, about the year 1157. In 1164, he resumed the war against Malcolm, and invaded Scotland with a large, but probably a tumultuary army, collected in the isles, in the mainland of Argyleshire, and in the neighbouring provinces of Ireland. He was defeated and slain in an engagement with a very inferior force, near Renfrew. His son Gillicolane fell in the same battle. This mighty chieftain married a daughter of Olaus, King of Man. From him our genealogists deduce two dynasties, distinguished in the stormy history of the Middle Ages; the Lords of the Isles descended from his elder son Ronald,—and the Lords of Lorn, who took their surname of M'Dougal, as descended of his second son Dougal. That Somerled's territories upon the mainland, and upon the islands, should have been thus divided between his two sons, instead of passing to the elder exclusively, may illustrate the uncertainty of descent among the great Highland families, which we shall presently notice.

NOTE 6.

Lord of the Isles.—P. 17.

The representative of this independent principality, for such it seems to have been, though acknowledging occasionally the pre-eminence of the Scottish crown, was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og; but the name has been, *euphonia gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his Castle of Dunnaverly,

during the time of his greatest distress. As I shall be equally liable to censure for attempting to decide a controversy which has long existed between three distinguished chieftains of this family, who have long disputed the representation of the Lord of the Isles, or for leaving a question of such importance altogether untouched, I choose, in the first place, to give such information as I have been able to derive from Highland genealogists, and which, for those who have patience to investigate such subjects, really contains some curious information concerning the history of the Isles. In the second place, I shall offer a few remarks upon the rules of succession at that period, without pretending to decide their bearing upon the question at issue, which must depend upon evidence which I have had no opportunity to examine.

“Angus Og,” says an ancient manuscript translated from the Gaelic, “son of Augus Mor, son of Donald, son of Ronald, son of Somerled, high chief and superior Lord of Innisgall, (or the Isles of the Gael, the general name given to the Hebrides,) he married a daughter of Cunbui, namely, Cathan; she was mother to John, son of Angus, and with her came an unusual portion from Ireland, viz., twenty-four clans, of whom twenty-four families in Scotland are descended. Angus had another son, namely, young John Fraoch, whose descendants are called Clan-Ean of Glencoe, and the McDonalds of Fraoch. This Angus Og died in Isla, where his body was interred. His son John succeeded to the inheritance of Innisgall. He had good descendants, namely, three sons procreate of Ann, daughter of Rodric, high chief of Lorn, and one daughter, Mary, married to John Maclean, Laird of Duart, and Lauchlan, his brother, Laird of Coll; she was interred in the church of the Black Nuns. The eldest sons of John were Ronald, Godfrey, and Angus. . . . He gave Ronald a great inheritance. These were the lands which he gave him, viz., from Kileumin in Abertarf to the river Seil, and from thence to Beilli, north of Eig and Rùm, and the two Uists, and from thence to the foot of the river Glacban, and threescore long ships. John married afterwards Margaret Stewart, daughter to Robert Stewart, King of Scotland, called John Fernyear; she bore him three good sons, Donald of the Isles, the heir, John the Tainister, (i.e., Thane,) the second son, and Alexander Carrach. John had another son called Marcus, of whom the clan MacDonald of Cnoc, in Tirowen, are descended. This John lived long, and made donations to Icolmkill; he covered the chapel of Eorsay-Elan, the chapel of Finlagam, and the chapel of the Isle of Tsuibhne, and gave the proper furniture for the service of God, upholding the clergy and monks; he built or repaired

the church of the Holy Cross immediately before his death. He died at his own castle of Ardtorinish, many priests and monks took the sacrament at his funeral, and they embalmed the body of this dear man, and brought it to Icolmkill; the abbot, monks, and vicar, came as they ought to meet the King of Fiongal,¹ and out of great respect to his memory mourned eight days and nights over it, and laid it in the same grave with his father, in the church of Oran, 1380.

"Ronald, son of John, was chief ruler of the Isles in his father's lifetime, and was old in the government at his father's death.

"He assembled the gentry of the Isles, brought the sceptre from Kildonan in Big, and delivered it to his brother Donald, who was thereupon called M'Donald, and Donald Lord of the Isles," contrary to the opinion of the men of the Isles.

"Ronald, son of John, son of Angus Og, was a great supporter of the church and clergy: his descendants are called Clanronald. He gave the lands of Tiruma, in Uist, to the minister of it for ever, for the honour of God and Columkill; he was proprietor of all the lands of the north along the coast and the isles; he died in the year of Christ 1386, in his own mansion of Castle Tirim, leaving five children. Donald of the Isles, son of John, son of Angus Og, the brother of Ronald, took possession of Innisgall by the consent of his brother and the gentry thereof; they were all obedient to him: he married Mary Lesley, daughter to the Earl of Ross, and by her came the earldom of Ross to the M'Donalds. After his succession to that earldom, he was called M'Donald, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross. There are many things written of him in other places.

"He fought the battle of Garioch (*i.e.* Harlaw) against Duke Murdoch, the governor, the Earl of Mar commanded the army, in support of his claim to the earldom of Ross: which was ceded to him by King James the First, after his release from the King of England, and Duke Murdoch, his two sons and retainers, were beheaded: he gave lands in Mull and Isla to the minister of Hi, and every privilege which the minister of Iona had formerly, besides vessels of gold and silver to Columkill for the monastery, and became himself one of the fraternity. He left issue, a lawful heir to Innisgall and Ross, namely, Alexander, the son of Donald: he died in Isla, and his body was interred in the south side of the temple of Oran. Alexander, called John of the Isles, son of Alexander of the

¹ Western Isles and adjacent coast.

² Innisgal.

Isles, son of Donald of the Isles. Angus, the third son of John, son of Angus Og, married the daughter of John, the son of Allan, which connexion caused some disagreement betwixt the two families about their marches and division of lands, the one party adhering to Angus, and the other to John : the differences increased so much, that John obtained from Allan all the lands betwixt *Abhan Fahda* (i.e. the long river) and *old na sionnach* (i.e. the fox-burn brook) in the upper part of Cantyre. Allan went to the king to complain of his son-in-law ; in a short time thereafter, there happened to be a great meeting about this young Angus's lands to the north of Inverness, where he was murdered by his own harper Mac-Cairbre, by cutting his throat with a long knife. He¹ lived a year thereafter, and many of those concerned were delivered up to the king. Angus's wife was pregnant at the time of his murder, and she bore him a son who was named Donald, and called Donald Du. He was kept in confinement until he was thirty years of age, when he was released by the men of Glenco, by the strong hand. After this enlargement, he came to the Isles, and convened the gentry thereof. There happened great feuds betwixt these families while Donald Du was in confinement, insomuch that Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan destroyed the greatest part of the posterity of John Mor of the Isles and Cantyre. For John Cathanach, son of John, son of Donald Balloch, son of John Mor, son of John, son of Angus Og (the chief of the descendants of John Mor), and John Mor, son of John Cathanach, and young John, son of John Cathanach, and young Donald Balloch, son of John Cathanach, were treacherously taken by Mac-Cean in the island of Finlagan, in Isla, and carried to Edinburgh, where he got them hanged at the Burrow-muir, and their bodies were buried in the church of St. Anthony, called the New Church. There were none left alive at that time of the children of John Cathanach, except Alexander, the son of John Cathanach, and Agnes Flach, who concealed themselves in the glens of Ireland. Mac-Cean, hearing of their hiding-places, went to cut down the woods of these glens, in order to destroy Alexander, and extirpate the whole race. At length Mac-Cean and Alexander met, were reconciled, and a marriage alliance took place ; Alexander married Mac-Cean's daughter, and she brought him good children. The Mac-Donalds of the north had also descendants ; for, after the death of John, Lord of the Isles, and Earl of Ross, and the murder of Angus, Alexander, the son of Archibald, the son of Alexander of the Isles, took possession, and John was in pos-

¹ The murderer, I presume, not the man who was murdered.

session of the earldom of Ross, and the north bordering country; he married a daughter of the Earl of Moray, of whom some of the men of the north had descended. The Mac-Kenzies rose against Alexander, and fought the battle called *Blar na Paire*. Alexander had only a few of the men of Ross at the battle. He went after that battle to take possession of the Isles, and sailed in a ship to the south to see if he could find any of the posterity of John Mor alive, to rise along with him; but Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan watched him as he sailed past, followed him to Oransay and Colonsay, went to the house where he was, and he and Alexander, son of John Cathanach, murdered him there.

"A good while after these things fell out, Donald Galda, son of Alexander, son of Archibald, became major; he, with the advice and direction of the Earl of Moray, came to the Isles, and Mac-Leod of the Lewis, and many of the gentry of the Isles, rose with him: they went by the promontory of Ardnamurchan, where they met Alexander, the son of John Cathanach, were reconciled to him. He joined his men with theirs against Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan, came upon him at a place called the Silver Craig, where he and his three sons, and a great number of his people, were killed, and Donald Galda was immediately declared Mac-Donald: And after the affair of Ardnamurchan, all the men of the Isles yielded to him, but he did not live above seven or eight weeks after it; he died at Carnaborg, in Mull, without issue. He had three sisters' daughters of Alexander, son of Archibald, who were portioned in the north upon the continent, but the earldom of Ross was kept for them. Alexander, the son of Archibald, had a natural son, called John Cam, of whom is descended Achnacochan, in Ramoeh, and Donald Gorm, son of Ronald, son of Alexander Dusan, of John Cam. Donald Du, son of Angus, son of John of the Isles, son of Alexander of the Isles, son of Donald of the Isles, son of John of the Isles, son of Angus Og, namely, the true heir of the Isles and Ross, came after his release from captivity to the Isles, and convened the men thereof, and he and the Earl of Lennox agreed to raise a great army for the purpose of taking possession, and a ship came from England with a supply of money to carry on the war, which landed at Mull, and the money was given to Mac-Lean of Duart to be distributed among the commanders of the army, which they not receiving in proportion as it should have been distributed among them, caused the army to disperse, which, when the Earl of Lennox heard, he disbanded his own men, and made it up with the King. Mac-Donald went to Ireland to raise men, but he died on his way to

Dublin, at Drogheda, of a fever, without issue of either sons or daughters."

In this history may be traced, though the Bard, or Seanachie, touches such a delicate discussion with a gentle hand, the point of difference between the three principal septs descended from the Lords of the Isles. The first question, and one of no easy solution, where so little evidence is produced, respects the nature of the connexion of John, called by the Archdean of the Isles "the Good John of Ila," and "the last Lord of the Isles," with Anne, daughter of Roderick Mac-Dougal, high-chief of Lorn. In the absence of positive evidence, presumptive must be resorted to, and I own it appears to render it in the highest degree improbable that this connexion was otherwise than legitimate. In the wars between David II. and Edward Baliol, John of the Isles espoused the Baliol interest, to which he was probably determined by his alliance with Roderick of Lorn, who was, from every family predilection, friendly to Baliol and hostile to Bruce. It seems absurd to suppose, that between two chiefs of the same descent, and nearly equal power and rank (though the Mac-Dougals had been much crushed by Robert Bruce), such a connexion should have been that of concubinage; and it appears more likely that the tempting offer of an alliance with the Bruce family, when they had obtained the decided superiority in Scotland, induced "the good John of Ila" to disinherit, to a certain extent, his eldest son Ronald, who came of a stock so unpopular as the Mac-Dougals, and to call to his succession his younger family, born of Margaret Stuart, daughter of Robert, afterwards King of Scotland. The setting aside of this elder branch of his family, was most probably a condition of his new alliance, and his being received into favour with the dynasty he had always opposed. Nor were the laws of succession at this early period so clearly understood as to bar such transactions. The numerous and strange claims set up to the crown of Scotland, when vacant by the death of Alexander III., make it manifest how very little the indefeasible hereditary right of primogeniture was valued at that period. In fact, the title of the Bruces themselves to the crown, though justly the most popular, when assumed with the determination of asserting the independence of Scotland, was, upon pure principle, greatly inferior to that of Baliol. For Bruce, the competitor, claimed as son of Isabella, *second* daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon; and John Baliol, as grandson of Margaret, the elder daughter of that same earl. So that the plea of Bruce was founded upon the very loose idea, that as the great grandson of David I., King of Scotland, and the nearest collateral relation of Alexander III., he was

entitled to succeed in exclusion of the great great grandson of the same David, though by an elder daughter. This maxim favoured of the ancient practice of Scotland, which often called a brother to succeed to the crown as nearer in blood than a grandchild, or even a son of a deceased monarch. But, in truth, the maxims of inheritance in Scotland were sometimes departed from at periods when they were much more distinctly understood. Such a transposition took place in the family of Hamilton, in 1513, when the descendants of James, third Lord, by Lady Janet Home, were set aside, with an appanage of great value indeed, in order to call to the succession those which he had by a subsequent marriage with Janet Beatoun. In short, many other examples might be quoted to show that the question of legitimacy is not always determined by the fact of succession; and there seems reason to believe that Ronald, descendant of "John of Isla," by Ann of Lorn, was legitimate, and therefore Lord of the Isles *de jure*, though *de facto* his younger half-brother Donald, son of his father's second marriage with the Princess of Scotland, superseded him in his right, and apparently by his own consent. From this Donald so preferred is descended the family of Sleat, now Lords MacDonald. On the other hand, from Ronald, the excluded heir, upon whom a very large appanage was settled, descended the chiefs of Glengary and Clanronald, each of whom had large possessions, and a numerous vassalage, and boasted a long descent of warlike ancestry. Their common ancestor Ronald was murdered by the Earl of Ross, at the Monastery of Elcho, A.D. 1346. I believe it has been subject of fierce dispute, whether Donald, who carried on the line of Glengary, or Allan of Moidart, the ancestor of the captains of Clanronald, was the eldest son of Ronald, the son of John of Isla. A humble Lowlander may be permitted to waive the discussion, since a Sennachie of no small note, who wrote in the sixteenth century, expresses himself upon this delicate topic in the following words:—

"I have now given you an account of everything you can expect of the descendants of the clan Colla (*i.e.* the MacDonalds), to the death of Donald Du at Drogheda, namely, the true line of those who possessed the Isles, Ross, and the mountainous countries of Scotland. It was Donald, the son of Angus, that was killed at Inverness, by his own harper (Mac-i'Cairbre), son of John of the Isles, son of Alexander, son of Donald, son of John, son of Angus Og. And I know not which of his kindred or relations is the true heir, except these five sons of John, the son of Angus Og, whom I here set down for you, namely, Ronald and Godfrey, the two sons

of the daughter of McDonald of Lorn, and Donald and John Mor, and Alexander Carrach, the three sons of Margaret Stewart, daughter of Robert Stewart, King of Scotland."—*Leabhar Dearg*.

NOTE 7.

—The House of Lorn.—P. 19.

The House of Lorn, as we observed in a former note, was, like the Lord of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew, in 1164. This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyleshire, and of course might rather be considered as petty princes than feudal barons. They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac-Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages. The Lord of Lorn, who flourished during the wars of Bruce, was Allaster (or Alexander) Mac-Dougal, called Allaster of Argyle. He had married the third daughter of John, called the Red Comyn, who was slain by Bruce in the Dominican Church at Dumfries, and hence he was a mortal enemy of that prince, and more than once reduced him to great straits during the early and distressed period of his reign, as we shall have repeated occasion to notice. Bruce, when he began to obtain an ascendancy in Scotland, took the first opportunity in his power to requite these injuries. He marched into Argyleshire to lay waste the country. John of Lorn, son of the chieftain, was posted with his followers in the formidable pass between Dalmally and Bunawe. It is a narrow path along the verge of the huge and precipitous mountain, called Cruachan-Ben, and guarded on the other side by a precipice overhanging Loch Awe. The pass seems to the eye of a soldier as strong, as it is wild and romantic to that of an ordinary traveller. But the skill of Bruce had anticipated this difficulty. While his main body, engaged in a skirmish with the men of Lorn, detained their attention to the front of their position, James of Douglas, with Sir Alexander Fraser, Sir William Wiseman, and Sir Andrew Grey, ascended the mountain with a select body of archery, and obtained possession of the heights which commanded the pass. A volley of arrows descending upon them directly warned the Argyleshire men of their perilous situation, and their resistance, which had hitherto been bold and manly, was changed into a precipitate flight. The deep and rapid river of Awe was then (we learn the fact from Barbour with some surprise) crossed by a bridge. This bridge the mountaineers

attempted to demolish, but Bruce's followers were too close upon their rear; they were, therefore, without refuge and defence, and were dispersed with great slaughter. John of Lorn, suspicious of the event, had early betaken himself to the galleys which he had upon the lake; but the feelings which Barbour (*B. vii., v. 394*) assigns to him, while witnessing the rout and slaughter of his followers, exculpate him from the charge of cowardice. After this decisive engagement, Bruce laid waste Argyleshire, and besieged Dunstaffnage Castle, on the western shore of Lorn, compelled it to surrender, and placed in that principal stronghold of the Mac-Dougals a garrison and governor of his own. The elder Mac-Dougal, now wearied with the contest, submitted to the victor; but his son, "rebellious," says Barbour, "as he wont to be," fled to England by sea. When the wars between the Bruce and Baliol factions again broke out in the reign of David II., the Lords of Lorn were again found upon the losing side, owing to their hereditary enmity to the house of Bruce. Accordingly, upon the issue of that contest, they were deprived by David II. and his successor of by far the greater part of their extensive territories, which were conferred upon Stewart, called the Knight of Lorn. The house of Mac-Dougal continued, however, to survive the loss of power, and affords a very rare, if not a unique, instance of a family of such unlimited power, and so distinguished during the middle ages, surviving the decay of their grandeur, and flourishing in a private station. The Castle of Dunolly, near Oban, with its dependencies, was the principal part of what remained to them, with their right of chieftainship over the families of their name and blood. These they continued to enjoy until the year 1715, when the representative incurred the penalty of forfeiture, for his accession to the insurrection of that period; thus losing the remains of his inheritance, to replace upon the throne the descendants of those princes, whose accession his ancestors had opposed at the expense of their feudal grandeur. The estate was, however, restored about 1745, to the father of the present proprietor, whom family experience had taught the hazard of interfering with the established government, and who remained quiet upon that occasion. He therefore regained his property when many Highland chiefs lost theirs.

Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than the situation of Dunolly. The ruins are situated upon a bold and precipitous promontory, overhanging Loch Etive, and distant about a mile from the village and port of Oban. The principal part which remains is the donjon or keep; but fragments of other buildings, overgrown with ivy, attest that it had been once a place of im-

portance, as large apparently as Artornish or Dunstaffnage. These fragments enclose a courtyard, of which the keep probably formed one side; the entrance being by a steep ascent from the neck of the isthmus, formerly cut across by a moat, and defended doubtless by outworks and a drawbridge. Beneath the castle stands the present mansion of the family, having on the one hand Loch Etive, with its islands and mountains, on the other two romantic eminences tufted with copsewood. There are other accompaniments suited to the scene; in particular, a huge upright pillar, or detached fragment of that sort of rock called plum-pudding stone, upon the shore, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. It is called *Clachna-cau*, or the Dog's Pillar, because Fingal is said to have used it as a stake to which he bound his celebrated dog Bran. Others say, that when the Lord of the Isles came upon a visit to the Lord of Lorn, the dogs brought for his sport were kept beside this pillar. Upon the whole, a more delightful and romantic spot can scarce be conceived; and it receives a moral interest from the considerations attached to the residence of a family once powerful enough to confront and defeat Robert Bruce, and now sunk into the shade of private life. It is at present possessed by Patrick Mac-Dougal, Esq., the lineal and undisputed representative of the ancient Lords of Lorn. The heir of Dunolly fell lately in Spain, fighting under the Duke of Wellington,—a death well becoming his ancestry.

NOTE 8.

And that keen knight, De Argentine.—P. 33.

Sir Egidius, or Giles de Argentine, was one of the most accomplished knights of the period. He had served in the wars of Henry of Luxemburg with such high reputation, that he was, in popular estimation, the third worthy of the age. Those to whom fame assigned precedence over him were, Henry of Luxemburg himself, and Robert Bruce. Argentine had warred in Palestine, encountered thrice with the Saracens, and had slain two antagonists in each engagement:—an easy matter, he said, for one Christian knight to slay two Pagan dogs. His death corresponded with his high character. With Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, he was appointed to attend immediately upon the person of Edward II. at Bannockburn. When the day was utterly lost they forced the king from the field. De Argentine saw the king safe from immediate danger, and then took his leave of him; "God be with you, sir," he said, "it is not my wont to fly." So saying, he turned his

horse, cried his war-cry, plunged into the midst of the combatants, and was slain. Baston, a rhyming monk who had been brought by Edward to celebrate his expected triumph, and who was compelled by the victors to compose a poem on his defeat, mentions with some feeling the death of Sir Giles de Argentine :

*Nobilis Argenten, pugil inclyte, dulcis Egidi,
Vix scicram mentem cum te succumbere vidi.*

"The first line mentions the three chief requisites of a true knight, noble birth, valour, and courteousness. Few Leonine couplets can be produced that have so much sentiment. I wish that I could have collected more ample memorials concerning a character altogether different from modern manners. Sir Giles d'Argentine was a hero of romance in real life." So observes the excellent Lord Hailes.

NOTE 9.

*"Fill me the mighty cup," he said,
"Erst own'd by royal Somerled."—P. 34.*

A Hebridean drinking cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the Castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac-Leod of Mac-Leod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan. The horn of Rorie More, preserved in the same family, and recorded by Dr. Johnson, is not to be compared with this piece of antiquity, which is one of the greatest curiosities in Scotland. The following is a pretty accurate description of its shape and dimensions, but cannot, I fear, be perfectly understood without a drawing.

This very curious piece of antiquity is nine inches and three quarters in inside depth, and ten and a half in height on the outside, the extreme measure over the lips being four inches and a half. The cup is divided into two parts by a wrought ledge, beautifully ornamented, about three-fourths of an inch in breadth. Beneath this ledge the shape of the cup is rounded off, and terminates in a flat circle, like that of a tea-cup; four short feet support the whole. Above the projecting ledge the shape of the cup is nearly square, projecting outward at the brim. The cup is made of wood (oak to all appearance), but most curiously wrought and embossed with silver work, which projects from the vessel. There are a number of regular projecting sockets, which appear to have been set with stones; two or three of them still hold pieces of coral, the rest

are empty. At the four corners of the projecting ledge, or cornice, are four sockets, much larger, probably for pebbles or precious stones. The workmanship of the silver is extremely elegant, and appears to have been highly gilded. The ledge, brim, and legs of the cup, are of silver. The family tradition bears that it was the property of Neil Ghlune-dhu, or Black-knee. But who this Neil was, no one pretends to say. Around the edge of the cup is a legend, perfectly legible, in the Saxon black-letter, which seems to run thus :

Ufo : Johis : Mich : Mgn : || Principis : De : || Hr :
Manae : Uich : || Liahia : Magryneil : || Et : Spat : Do :
Ihu : Da : || Clea : Ilbra : Ipa : || Fecit : Quo : Di :
Iz : 93o Onili : Dimi : ||

The inscription may run thus at length : *Ufo Johanis Mich Magni Principis de Hr Manae Vich Liahia Magryneil et sperat Domino Ihesu dari clementiam illorum opera. Fecit Anno Domini 993 Onili Oimi.* Which may run in English : Ufo, the son of John, the son of Magnus, Prince of Man, the grandson of Liahia Macgryneil, trusts in the Lord Jesus that their works (*i.e.* his own and those of his ancestors) will obtain mercy. Oneil Oimi made this in the year of God nine hundred and ninety-three.

But this version does not include the puzzling letters **HN** before the word Manae. Within the mouth of the cup the letters **Ihs** : (Jesus) are repeated four times. From this and other circumstances it would seem to have been a chalice. This circumstance may perhaps account for the use of the two Arabic numerals 93. These figures were introduced by Pope Sylvester, A.D. 991, and might be used in a vessel formed for church service so early as 993. The workmanship of the whole cup is extremely elegant, and resembles, I am told, antiques of the same nature preserved in Ireland.

The cups, thus elegantly formed, and highly valued, were by no means utensils of mere show. Martin gives the following account of the festivals of his time, and I have heard similar instances of brutality in the Lowlands at no very distant period.

“ The manner of drinking used by the chief men of the Isles is called in their language *Streah*, *i.e.*, a Round ; for the company sat in a circle, the cup-bearer fill'd the drink round to them, and all was drank out, whatever the liquor was, whether strong or weak ; they continued drinking sometimes twenty-four, sometimes forty-eight hours : It was reckoned a piece of manhood to drink until they became drunk, and there were two men with a barrow attending punctually on such occasions.

They stood at the door until some became drunk, and they carry'd them upon the barrow to bed, and returned again to their post as long as any continued fresh, and so carried off the whole company, one by one, as they became drunk. Several of my acquaintance have been witnesses to this custom of drinking, but it is now abolished."

This savage custom was not entirely done away within this last generation. I have heard of a gentleman who happened to be a water-drinker, and was permitted to abstain from the strong potations of the company. The bearers carried away one man after another, till no one was left but this Scottish Mirgrip. They then came to do him the same good office, which, however, he declined as unnecessary, and proposed to walk to his bedroom. It was a permission he could not obtain. Never such a thing had happened, they said, in the castle! that it was impossible but he must require their assistance, at any rate he must submit to receive it; and carried him off in the barrow accordingly. A classical penalty was sometimes imposed on those who balked the rules of good fellowship by evading their share of the banquet. The same author continues:—

"Among persons of distinction it was reckoned an affront put upon any company to broach a piece of wine, ale, or aquavita, and not to see it all drank out at one meeting. If any man chance to go out from the company, though but for a few minutes, he is obliged, upon his return, and before he take his seat, to make an apology for his absence in rhyme; which if he cannot perform, he is liable to such a share of the reckoning as the company thinks fit to impose: which custom obtains in many places still, and is called *Bianchiz Bard*, which, in their language, signifies the poet's congratulating the company."

Few cups were better, at least more actively, employed in the rude hospitality of the period, than those of *Dunvegan*; one of which we have just described.

NOTE 10.

With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief.—P. 37.

It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents. He was crowned at Scone by the general consent of the Scottish barons, but his authority endured but a short time. According to the phrase said to have been used by his wife, he was for

that year "a summer king, but not a winter one." On the 29th March, 1306, he was crowned king at Scone. Upon the 19th June, in the same year, he was totally defeated at Methven, near Perth; and his most important adherents, with few exceptions, were either executed or compelled to embrace the English interest, for safety of their lives and fortunes. After this disaster, his life was that of an outlaw, rather than a candidate for monarchy. He separated himself from the females of his retinue, whom he sent for safety to the Castle of Kildrummie, in Aberdeenshire, where they afterward became captives to England. From Aberdeenshire, Bruce retreated to the mountainous parts of Breadalbane, and approached the borders of Argyleshire. There, as mentioned in a previous Note (7), and more fully in Note 11, he was defeated by the Lord of Lorn, who had assumed arms against him in revenge of the death of his relative, John the Red Comyn. Escaped from this peril, Bruce, with his few attendants, subsisted by hunting and fishing, until the weather compelled them to seek better sustenance and shelter than the Highland mountains afforded. With great difficulty they crossed, from Rowardennan probably, to the western banks of Lochlomond, partly in a miserable boat, and partly by swimming. The valiant and loyal Earl of Lennox, to whose territories they had now found their way, welcomed them with tears, but was unable to assist them to make an effectual head. The Lord of the Isles, then in possession of great part of Cantyre, received the fugitive monarch and future restorer of his country's independence, in his Castle of Dunnaverty, in that district. But treason, says Barbour, was so general, that the King durst not abide there. Accordingly, with the remnant of his followers, Bruce embarked for Rath-Erin, or Rachine, the Recina of Ptolemy, a small island, lying almost opposite to the shores of Ballycastle, on the coast of Ireland. The islanders at first fled from their new and armed guests, but upon some explanation submitted themselves to Bruce's sovereignty. He resided among them until the approach of spring, [1306,] when he again returned to Scotland, with the desperate resolution to reconquer his kingdom, or perish in the attempt. The progress of his success, from its commencement to its completion, forms the brightest period in Scottish history.

NOTE 11.

The Brooch of Lorn.—P. 38.

It has been generally mentioned in the preceding notes, that Robert Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed

by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire Highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the Lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac-Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men; that Mac-Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was equal to his vigour of mind, and would have been slain on the spot, had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms M'Keoch, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed by the other followers of Lorn, that he was forced to abandon the mantle, and brooch which fastened it, clasped in the dying grasp of the Mac-Keochs. A studded brooch, said to have been that which King Robert lost upon this occasion, was long preserved in the family of Mac-Dougal, and was lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.

The metrical history of Barbour throws an air of credibility upon the tradition, although it does not entirely coincide either in the names or number of the vassals by whom Bruce was assailed, and makes no mention of the personal danger of Lorn, or of the loss of Bruce's mantle. The last circumstance, indeed, might be warrantably omitted.

According to Barbour, the King, with his handful of followers, not amounting probably to three hundred men, encountered Lorn with about a thousand Argyleshire men, in Glen-Douchart, at the head of Breadalbane, near Teyndrum. The place of action is still called Dalry, or the King's Field. The field of battle was unfavourable to Bruce's adherents, who were chiefly men-at-arms. Many of the horses were slain by the long pole-axes, of which the Argyleshire Scottish had learned the use from the Norwegians. At length Bruce commanded a retreat up a narrow and difficult pass, he himself bringing up the rear, and repeatedly turning and driving back the more venturous assailants. Lorn, observing the skill and valour used by his enemy in protecting the retreat of his followers, "Methinks, Murthokson," said he, addressing one of his followers, "he resembles Gol Mak-morn, protecting his followers from Fingal."—"A most unworthy comparison," observes the Archdeacon of Aberdeen, unsuspecting of the future fame of these names; he might with more propriety have compared

the King to Sir Gaudefer de Layrs, protecting the foragers of Gadyrs against the attacks of Alexander." Two brothers, the strongest among Lorn's followers, whose names Barbour calls Mackyn-Drosser, (interpreted Durward, or Porterson,) resolved to rid their chief of this formidable foe. A third person (perhaps the MacKeoch of the family tradition) associated himself with them for this purpose. They watched their opportunity until Bruce's party had entered a pass between a lake (Loch Dochart probably) and a precipice, where the King, who was the last of the party, had scarce room to manage his steed. Here his three foes sprung upon him at once. One seized his bridle, but received a wound which hewed off his arm; a second grasped Bruce by the stirrup and leg, and endeavoured to dismount him, but the King, putting spurs to his horse, threw him down, still holding by the stirrup. The third, taking advantage of an acclivity, sprung up behind him upon his horse. Bruce, however, whose personal strength is uniformly mentioned as exceeding that of most men, extricated himself from his grasp, threw him to the ground, and cleft his skull with his sword. By similar exertion he drew the stirrup from his grasp whom he had overthrown, and killed him also with his sword as he lay among the horse's feet. The story seems romantic, but this was the age of romantic exploit; and it must be remembered that Bruce was armed cap-a-pie, and the assailants were half-clad mountaineers. Barbour adds the following circumstance, highly characteristic of the sentiments of chivalry. Mac-Naughton, a Baron of Cowal, pointed out to the Lord of Lorn the deeds of valour which Bruce performed in this memorable retreat, with the highest expressions of admiration. "It seems to give thee pleasure," said Lorn, "that he makes such havoc among our friends."—"Not so, by my faith," replied Mac-Naughton; "but be he friend or foe who achieves high deeds of chivalry, men should bear faithful witness to his valour; and never have I heard of one, who by his knightly feats, has extricated himself from such dangers as have this day surrounded Bruce."

NOTE 12.

*Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work.*—P. 39.

Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland, was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The causes of this act

of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians, and cannot now be ascertained. The fact that they met at the high altar of the Minorites, or Greyfriars Church in Dumfries, that their difference broke out into high and insulting language, and that Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, is certain. Rushing to the door of the church, Bruce met two powerful barons, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, and James de Lindsay, who eagerly asked him what tidings? "Bad tilings," answered Bruce, "I doubt I have slain Comyn."—"Doubtest thou?" said Kirkpatrick; "I make sicker," (*i.e.* sure). With these words, he and Lindsay rushed into the church, and despatched the wounded Comyn. The Kirkpatricks of Closeburn assumed, in memory of this deed, a hand holding a dagger, with the memorable words, "I make sicker." Some doubt having been started by the late Lord Hailes as to the identity of the Kirkpatrick who completed this day's work with Sir Roger, then representative of the ancient family of Closeburn, my kind and ingenious friend, Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, has furnished me with the following memorandum, which appears to fix the deed with his ancestor:

"The circumstances of the Regent Cummin's murder, from which the family of Kirkpatrick, in Nithsdale, is said to have derived its crest and motto, are well known to all conversant with Scottish history; but Lord Hailes has started a doubt as to the authenticity of this tradition, when recording the murder of Roger Kirkpatrick, in his own Castle of Caerlaverock, by Sir James Lindsay. 'Fordun,' says his Lordship, 'remarks that Lindsay and Kirkpatrick were the heirs of the two men who accompanied Robert Brus at the fatal conference with Comyn. If Fordun was rightly informed as to this particular, an argument arises, in support of a notion which I have long entertained, that the person who struck his dagger in Comyn's heart, was *not* the representative of the honourable family of Kirkpatrick in Nithsdale. Roger de K. was made prisoner at the battle of Durham, in 1346. Roger de Kirkpatrick was alive on the 6th of August, 1357; for, on that day, Humphry, the son and heir of Roger de K., is proposed as one of the young gentlemen who were to be hostages for David Bruce. Roger de K. Miles was present at the Parliament held at Edinburgh, 25th September, 1357, and he is mentioned as alive 3rd October, 1357, (*Foedera*;) it follows, of necessary consequence, that Roger de K., murdered in June, 1357, must have been a different person.'—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 242.

"To this it may be answered, that at the period of the regent's murder, there were only *two* families of the name of Kirkpatrick (nearly allied to each other) in existence—Stephen Kirkpatrick, styled in the Chartulary of Kelso (1278) *Dominus villæ de Closeburn, Filius et hæres Domini Ade de Kirkpatrick, Militis*, whose father, Ivone de Kirkpatrick, witnesses a charter of Robert Brus, Lord of Annandale, before the year 1141,) had two sons, Sir Roger, who carried on the line of Closeburn, and Duncan, who married Isobel, daughter and heiress of Sir David Torthorwald of that Ilk; they had a charter of the lands of Torthorwald from King Robert Brus, dated 10th August, the year being omitted—Umphray, the son of Duncan and Isobel, got a charter of Torthorwald from the king, 16th July, 1322—his son, Roger of Torthorwald, got a charter from John the Grahame, son of Sir John Grahame of Mosskessen, of an annual rent of 40 shillings, out of the lands of Overdryft, 1355—his son, William Kirkpatrick, grants a charter to John of Garroch, of the twa merk land of Glengip and Garvellgill, within the tenement of Wamphray, 22nd April, 1372. From this it appears that the Torthorwald branch was not concerned in the affair of Comyn's murder, and the inflictions of Providence which ensued: Duncan Kirkpatrick, if we are to believe the Blind Minstrel, (B. v., v. 920.,) was the firm friend of Wallace, to whom he was related. But this Baron seems to have had no share in the adventures of King Robert; the crest of his family, as it still remains on a carved stone built into a cottage wall, in the village of Torthorwald, bears some resemblance, says Grose, to a rose.

NOTE 13.

*Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crowned with wreath of green.*—P. 48.

Stow gives the following curious account of the trial and execution of this celebrated patriot:—"William Wallace, who had oft-times set Scotland in great trouble, was taken and brought to London, with great numbers of men and women wondering upon him. He was lodged in the house of William Delect, a citizen of London, in Fenchurch-street. On the morrow, being the eve of St. Bartholomew, he was brought on horseback to Westminster. John Legrave and Geffrey, knights, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of London, and many others, both on horseback and on foot, accompanying him; and in the great hall at Westminster, he being placed on the south bench, crowned with laurel, for that he had said in times past that he

ought to bear a crown in that hall, as it was commonly reported and being appeached for a traitor by Sir Peter Malorie, the king's justice, he answered, that he was never traitor to the King of England; but for other things whereof he was accused he confessed them; and was after headed and quartered."—*Stow, Chr.* p. 209. There is something singularly doubtful about the mode in which Wallace was taken. That he was betrayed to the English is indubitable; and popular fame charges Sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy. "Accursed," says Arnold Blair, "be the day of nativity of John de Menteith, and may his name be struck out of the book of life." But John de Menteith was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and was governor of Dumbarton Castle by commission from Edward the First; and therefore, as the accurate Lord Hailes has observed, could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be. The truth seems to be, that Menteith, thoroughly engaged in the English interest, pursued Wallace closely, and made him prisoner through the treachery of an attendant, whom Peter Langtoft calls Jack Short.

"William Waleis is nomen that master was of theves,
Tiding to the king is comen that robbery mischeives,
Sir John of Menetest sued William so nigh,
He tok him when he ween'd leest, on night, his leman
him by,
That was through treason of *Jack Short* his man,
He was the encheson that Sir John so him ran,
Jack's brother had he slain, the Walleis that is said,
The more Jack was fain to do William that braid."

From this it would appear that the infamy of seizing Wallace, must rest between a degenerate Scottish nobleman, the vassal of England, and a domestic, the obscure agent of his treachery; between Sir John Menteith, son of Walter, Earl of Menteith, and the traitor Jack Short.

NOTE 14.

*Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are they?
Where Somerville, the kind and free?
And Fraser, flower of chivalry?—* P. 48.

When these lines were written, the author was remote from

the means of correcting his indistinct recollection concerning the individual fate of Bruce's followers, after the battle of Methven. Hugh de la Haye, and Thomas Somerville of Lintoun and Cowdally, ancestor of Lord Somerville, were both made prisoners at that defeat, but neither was executed.

Sir Nigel Bruce was the younger brother of Robert, to whom he committed the charge of his wife and daughter, Marjorie, and the defence of his strong castle of Kildrummie, near the head of the Don, in Aberdeenshire. Kildrummie long resisted the arms of the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford, until the magazine was treacherously burnt. The garrison was then compelled to surrender at discretion, and Nigel Bruce, a youth remarkable for personal beauty, as well as for gallantry, fell into the hands of the unrelenting Edward. He was tried by a special commission at Berwick, was condemned, and executed.

Christopher Seatoun shared the same unfortunate fate. He also was distinguished by personal valour, and signalized himself in the fatal battle of Methven. Robert Bruce adventured his person in that battle like a knight of romance. He dismounted Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, but was in his turn dismounted by Sir Philip Mowbray. In this emergency Seatoun came to his aid, and remounted him. Langtoft mentions, that in this battle the Scottish wore white surplices, or shirts, over their armour, that those of rank might not be known. In this manner both Bruce and Seatoun escaped. But the latter was afterwards betrayed to the English, through means, according to Barbour, of one Mac-Nab, "a disciple of Judas," in whom the unfortunate knight reposed entire confidence. There was some peculiarity respecting his punishment; because, according to Matthew of Westminster, he was considered not as a Scottish subject, but an Englishman. He was therefore taken to Dumfries, where he was tried, condemned, and executed, for the murder of a soldier slain by him. His brother, John de Seton, had the same fate at Newcastle; both were considered as accomplices in the slaughter of Comyn, but in what manner they were particularly accessory to that deed does not appear.

The fate of Sir Simon Frazer, or Frizel, ancestor of the family of Lovat, is dwelt upon at great length, and with savage exultation, by the English historians. This knight, who was renowned for personal gallantry, and high deeds of chivalry, was also made prisoner, after a gallant defence, in the battle of Methven.

NOTE 15.

*I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be repress'd.*—P. 52.

Bruce, like other heroes, observed omens, and one is recorded by tradition. After he had retreated to one of the miserable places of shelter, in which he could venture to take some repose after his disasters, he lay stretched upon a handful of straw, and abandoned himself to his melancholy meditations. He had now been defeated four times, and was upon the point of resolving to abandon all hopes of further opposition to his fate, and to go to the Holy Land. It chanced his eye, while he was thus pondering, was attracted by the exertions of a spider, who, in order to fix his web, endeavoured to swing himself from one beam to another above his head. Involuntarily he became interested in the pertinacity with which the insect renewed his exertions, after failing six times; and it occurred to him that he would decide his own course according to the success or failure of the spider. At the seventh effort the insect gained his object; and Bruce, in like manner, persevered and carried his own. Hence it has been held unlucky or ungrateful, or both, in one of the names of Bruce to kill a spider.

The archdeacon of Aberdeen, instead of the abbot of this tale, introduces an Irish Pythoness, who not only predicted his good fortune as he left the island of Rachrin, but sent her two sons along with him, to ensure her own family a share in it.

NOTE 16.

*A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled.*—P. 53.

This is not metaphorical. The echoes of Scotland did actually

—— “ring

With the bloodhounds that bayed for her fugitive king.”

A very curious and romantic tale is told by Barbour upon this subject, which may be abridged as follows:—

When Bruce had again got footing in Scotland in the spring of 1306, he continued to be in a very weak and precarious condition, gaining, indeed, occasional advantages, but obliged to fly before his enemies whenever they assembled in force. Upon

one occasion, while he was lying with a small party in the wilds of Cumnock, in Ayrshire, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, with his inveterate foe John of Lorn, came against him suddenly with eight hundred Highlanders, besides a large body of men-at-arms. They brought with them a slough-dog, or bloodhound, which, some say, had been once a favourite with the Bruce himself, and therefore was least likely to lose the trace.

Bruce, whose force was under four hundred men, continued to make head against the cavalry, till the men of Lorn had nearly cut off his retreat. Perceiving the danger of his situation, he acted as the celebrated and ill-requited Mina is said to have done in similar circumstances. He divided his force into three parts, appointed a place of rendezvous, and commanded them to retreat by different routes. But when John of Lorn arrived at the spot where they divided, he caused the hound to be put upon the trace, which immediately directed him to the pursuit of that party which Bruce headed. This, therefore,* Lorn pursued with his whole force, paying no attention to the others. The king again subdivided his small body into three parts, and with the same result, for the pursuers attached themselves exclusively to that which he led in person. He then caused his followers to disperse, and retained only his foster-brother in his company. The slough-dog followed the trace, and, neglecting the others, attached himself and his attendants to pursuit of the king. Lorn became convinced that his enemy was nearly in his power, and detached five of his most active attendants to follow him, and interrupt his flight. They did so with all the agility of mountaineers. "What aid wilt thou make?" said Bruce to his single attendant, when he saw the five men gain ground on him. "The best I can," replied his foster-brother. "Then," said Bruce, "here I make my stand." The five pursuers came up fast. The king took three to himself, leaving the other two to his foster-brother. He slew the first who encountered him; but observing his foster-brother hard pressed, he sprung to his assistance, and despatched one of his assailants. Leaving him to deal with the survivor, he returned upon the other two, both of whom he slew before his foster-brother had despatched his single antagonist. When this hard encounter was over, with a courtesy, which in the whole work marks Bruce's character, he thanked his foster-brother for his aid. "It likes you to say so," answered his follower; "but you yourself slew four of the five."—"True," said the king, "but only because I had better opportunity than you. They were not apprehensive of me when they saw me encounter three, so I had a

moment's time to spring to thy aid, and to return equally unexpectedly upon my own opponents."

In the meanwhile Lorn's party approached rapidly, and the king and his foster-brother betook themselves to a neighbouring wood. Here they sat down, for Bruce was exhausted by fatigue, until the cry of the slough-hound came so near, that his foster-brother entreated Bruce to provide for his safety by retreating further. "I have heard," answered the king, "that whosoever will wade a bow-shot length down a running stream, shall make the slough-hound lose scent.—Let us try the experiment, for were yon devilish hound silenced, I should care little for the rest."

Lorn in the meanwhile advanced, and found the bodies of his slain vassals, over whom he made his moan, and threatened the most deadly vengeance. Then he followed the hound to the side of the brook, down which the king had waded a great way. Here the hound was at fault, and John of Lorn, after long attempting in vain to recover Bruce's trace, relinquished the pursuit.

"Others," says Barbour, "affirm, that upon this occasion the king's life was saved by an excellent archer who accompanied him, and who perceiving they would be finally taken by means of the blood-hound, hid himself in a thicket, and shot him with an arrow. In which way," adds the metrical biographer, "this escape happened I am uncertain, but at that brook the king escaped from his pursuers."

The English historians agree with Barbour as to the mode in which the English pursued Bruce and his followers, and the dexterity with which he evaded them.

NOTE 17.

———*he paused ; for Falkirk's woes*
Upon his conscious soul arose.—P. 60.

I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition, that Bruce fought against Wallace, and the array of Scotland, at the fatal battle of Falkirk. The story, which seems to have no better authority than that of Blind Harry, bears, that having made much slaughter during the engagement, he sat down to dine with the conquerors without washing the filthy witness from his hands.

"Fasting he was, and had been in great need,
Blooded were all his weapons and his weed;
Southeron lords scorn'd him in terms rude,
And said, Behold yon Scot eats his own blood.

“Then rued he sore, for reasons bad he known,
That blood and land alike should be his own;
With them he long was, ere he got away;
But contrair Scots he fought not from that day.”

The account given by most of our historians, of the conversation between Bruce and Wallace over the Carron river, is equally apocryphal. There is full evidence that Bruce was not at that time on the English side, nor present at the battle of Falkirk; nay, that he acted as a guardian of Scotland, along with John Comyn, in the name of Baliol, and in opposition to the English. He was the grandson of the competitor, with whom he has been sometimes confounded.

NOTE 18.

*Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's land.*—P. 82.

To establish his dominion in Scotland had been a favourite object of Edward's ambition, and nothing could exceed the pertinacity with which he pursued it, unless his inveterate resentment against the insurgents, who so frequently broke the English yoke when he deemed it most firmly riveted. After the battles of Falkirk and Methven, and the dreadful examples which he had made of Wallace and other champions of national independence, he probably concluded every chance of insurrection was completely annihilated. This was in 1306, when Bruce, as we have seen, was utterly expelled from Scotland: yet, in the conclusion of the same year, Bruce was again in arms and formidable; and in 1307, Edward, though exhausted by a long and wasting malady, put himself at the head of the army destined to destroy him utterly. But even his spirit of vengeance was unable to restore his exhausted strength. He reached Burgh-upon-Sands, a petty village of Cumberland, on the shores of the Solway Firth, and there, 6th July, 1307, expired in sight of the detested and devoted country of Scotland. His dying injunctions to his son required him to continue the Scottish war, and never to recall Gaveston. Edward II. disobeyed both charges. Yet more to mark his animosity, the dying monarch ordered his bones to be carried with the invading army.

Edward's commands were not obeyed, for he was interred in Westminster Abbey, with the appropriate inscription.—

“EDWARDUS PRIMUS SCOTORUM MALLEUS HIQ EST.
FACTUM SERVA.”

Yet some steps seem to have been taken towards rendering his body capable of occasional transportation, for it was exquisitely embalmed, as was ascertained when his tomb was opened some years ago. Edward II judged wisely in not carrying the dead body of his father into Scotland, since he would not obey his living counsels.

It ought to be observed, that though the order of the incidents is reversed in the poem, yet, in point of historical accuracy, Bruce had landed in Scotland, and obtained some successes of consequence, before the death of Edward I.

NOTE 19.

*Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
A minster to her Maker's praise.*—P. 87.

It would be unpardonable to detain the reader upon a wonder so often described, and yet so incapable of being understood by description. This palace of Neptune is even grander upon a second than the first view. The stupendous columns which form the sides of the cave, the depth and strength of the tide which rolls its deep and heavy swell up to the extremity of the vault—the variety of tints formed by white, crimson, and yellow stalactites, or petrifications, which occupy the vacancies between the base of the broken pillars which form the roof, and intersect them with a rich, curious, and variegated chasing, occupying each interstice—the corresponding variety below water, where the ocean rolls over a dark-red or violet-coloured rock, from which, as from a base, the basaltic columns arise—the tremendous noise of the swelling tide, mingling with the deep-toned echoes of the vault—are circumstances elsewhere unparalleled.

Nothing can be more interesting than the varied appearance of the little archipelago of islets, of which Staffa is the most remarkable. This group, called in Gaelic Tresharnish, affords a thousand varied views to the voyager, as they appear in different positions with reference to his course. The variety of their shape contributes much to the beauty of these effects.

NOTE 20.

*With haughty laugh his head he turned,
And dashed away the tear he scorned.*—P. 96.

The kind, and yet fiery character of Edward Bruce, is well painted by Bartour, in the account of his behaviour after

the battle of Bannockburn. Sir Walter Ross, one of the very few Scottish nobles who fell in that battle, was so dearly beloved by Edward, that he wished the victory had been lost, so Ross had lived.

“ Out-taken him, men has not seen
Where he for any men made moaning.”

And here the venerable Archdeacon intimates a piece of scandal. Sir Edward Bruce, it seems, loved Ross's sister, *par amours*, to the neglect of his own lady, sister to David de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole. This criminal passion had evil consequences; for, in resentment of the affront done to his sister, Athole attacked the guard which Bruce had left at Cambuskenneth, during the battle of Bannockburn, to protect his magazine of provisions, and slew Sir William Keith, the commander. For which treason he was forfeited.

In like manner, when in a sally from Carrickfergus, Neil Fleming, and the guards whom he commanded, had fallen, after the protracted resistance which saved the rest of Edward Bruce's army, he make such moan as surprised his followers:

“ Sic moan he made men had ferly,¹
For he was not customably
Wont for to moan men anything,
Nor would not hear men make moaning.”

Such are the nice traits of character so often lost in general history.

NOTE 21.

*Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen,
From Hastings, late their English lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.*—P. 110.

Brodick or Brathwick Castle, in the Isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodick-Bay, and not far distant from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the island of Lamlash. This important place had been assailed a short time before Bruce's arrival in the island. James Lord Douglas, who accompanied Bruce to his retreat in Rachrine, seems, in the spring of 1306, to have tired of his abode there, and set out accordingly, in the phrase of the times, to see what adventure God would send him. Sir Robert Boyd accompanied him; and his knowledge of the localities of Arran

¹ Wonder.

appears to have directed his course thither. They landed in the island privately, and appear to have laid an ambush for Sir John Hastings, the English governor of Brodwick, and surprised a considerable supply of arms and provisions, and nearly took the castle itself. Indeed, that they actually did so, has been generally averred by historians, although it does not appear from the narrative of Barbour. On the contrary, it would seem that they took shelter within a fortification of the inhabitants, a rampart called *Tor an Schian*. When they were joined by Bruce, it seems probable that they had gained Brodick Castle. At least tradition says, that from the battlements of the tower he saw the supposed signal-fire on Turnberry-nook. . . . The castle is now much modernized, but has a dignified appearance, being surrounded by flourishing plantations.

NOTE 22.

*Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight?
It ne'er was known.*—P. 118.

The following are the words of an ingenious correspondent, to whom I am obliged for much information respecting Turnberry and its neighbourhood. "The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick, relates to the fire seen by him from the Isle of Arran. It is still generally reported, and religiously believed by many, that this fire was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being; and it is said, that, for several centuries, the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the king first saw it from the turrets of Brodick castle; and some go so far as to say, that if the exact time were known, it would be still seen. That this superstitious notion is very ancient, is evident from the place where the fire is said to have appeared, being called the Bogles' Brae, beyond the remembrance of man. In support of this curious belief, it is said that the practice of burning heath for the improvement of land was then unknown; that a spunkie (Jack o'lanthorn) could not have been seen across the breadth of the Forth of Clyde, between Ayrshire and Arran; and that the courier of Bruce was his kinsman, and never suspected of treachery."—Letter from Mr. Joseph Train, of Newton Stuart, author of an ingenious Collection of Poems, illustrative of many ancient Traditions in Galloway and Ayrshire, Edinburgh, 1814. [Mr. Train made a journey into Ayrshire at Sir Walter Scott's request, on purpose to collect

accurate information for the Notes to this poem; and the reader will find more of the fruits of his labours in Note 24. This is the same gentleman whose friendly assistance is so often acknowledged in the Notes and Introductions of the *Waverley Novels*.]

NOTE 23.

*(Seek not the scene, the axe, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marred it now.)*—P. 120.

The Castle of Turnberry, on the coast of Ayrshire, was the property of Robert Bruce, in right of his mother. Lord Hailes mentions the following remarkable circumstance concerning the mode in which he became proprietor of it:—"Martha, Countess of Carrick in her own right, the wife of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, bare him a son, afterwards Robert I. (11th July, 1274.) The circumstances of her marriage were singular happening to meet Robert Bruce in her domains, she became enamoured of him, and with some violence led him to her castle of Turnberry. A few days after she married him, without the knowledge of the relations of either party, and without the requisite consent of the king. The king instantly seized her castle and whole estates: She afterwards atoned by a fine for her feudal delinquency. Little did Alexander foresee, that, from this union, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy was to arise."—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 180. The same obliging correspondent, whom I have quoted in the preceding note, gives me the following account of the present state of the ruins of Turnberry:—"Turnberry Point is a rock projecting into the sea; the top of it is about eighteen feet above high-water mark. Upon this rock was built the castle. There is about twenty-five feet high of the wall next to the sea yet standing. Upon the land-side the wall is only about four feet high; the length has been sixty feet, and the breadth forty-five: It was surrounded by a ditch, but that is now nearly filled up. The top of the ruin, rising between forty and fifty feet above the water, has a majestic appearance from the sea. There is not much local tradition in the vicinity connected with Bruce or his history. In front, however, of the rock, upon which stands Culzean Castle, is the mouth of a romantic cavern, called the Cove of Colean, in which it is said Bruce and his followers concealed themselves immediately after landing, till they arranged matters for their farther enterprises. Burns mentions it in the poem of *Hallowe'en*. The only place to the south of Turnberry worth mentioning, with reference to Bruce's history, is the Weary Nuik, a little romantic green hill,

where he and his party are said to have rested, after assaulting the castle."

Around the Castle of Turnberry was a level plain of about two miles in extent, forming the castle park. There could be nothing, I am informed, more beautiful than the copsewood and verdure of this extensive meadow, before it was invaded by the ploughshare.

NOTE 24.

The Bruce hath won his father's hall!—P. 129.

I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate. The fact is, that he was only strong enough to alarm and drive in the outposts of the English garrison, then commanded, not by Clifford, as assumed in the text, but by Percy. Neither was Clifford slain upon this occasion, though he had several skirmishes with Bruce. He fell afterwards in the battle of Bannockburn. Bruce, after alarming the castle of Turnberry, and surprising some part of the garrison, who were quartered without the walls of the fortress, retreated into the mountainous part of Carrick, and there made himself so strong, that the English were obliged to evacuate Turnberry, and at length the Castle of Ayr. Many of his benefactions and royal gifts attest his attachment to the hereditary followers of his house, in this part of the country.

It is generally known, that Bruce, in consequence of his distresses after the battle of Methven, was affected by a scorbutic disorder, which was then called a leprosy. It is said he experienced benefit from the use of a medicinal spring, about a mile north of the town of Ayr, called from that circumstance King's Ease.¹ The following is the tradition of the country, collected by Mr. Train:—"After Robert ascended the throne, he founded the priory of Dominican monks, every one of whom was under the obligation of putting up to Heaven a prayer once every week-day, and twice in holydays, for the recovery of the king; and, after his death, these masses were continued for the saving of his soul. The ruins of this old monastery are now nearly level with the ground. Robert likewise caused houses to be built round the well of King's Ease, for eight lepers, and allowed eight bolls of oatmeal, and £28

¹ [Sir Walter Scott had misread Mr. Train's MS., which gave not *King's Ease*, but *King's Case*, i.e., *Casa Regis*, the name of the royal foundation described below. Mr. Train's kindness enables the Editor to make this correction. 1883.]

Scotch money, per annum, to each person. These donations were laid upon the lands of Fullarton, and are now payable by the Duke of Portland. The farm of Shiels, in the neighbourhood of Ayr, has to give, if required, a certain quantity of straw for the lepers' beds, and so much to thatch their houses annually. Each leprous person had a drinking-horn provided him by the king, which continued to be hereditary in the house to which it was first granted. One of those identical horns, of very curious workmanship, was in the possession of the late Colonel Fullarton of that ilk."

My correspondent proceeds to mention some curious remnants of antiquity respecting this foundation. "In compliment to Sir William Wallace, the great deliverer of his country, King Robert Bruce invested the descendants of that hero with the right of placing all the lepers upon the establishment of King's Case. This patronage continued in the family of Craigie, till it was sold along with the lands of the late Sir Thomas Wallace. The burgh of Ayr then purchased the right of applying the donations of King's Case to the support of the poor-house of Ayr. The lepers' charter-stone was a basaltic rock, exactly the shape of a sheep's kidney, and weighing an Ayrshire boll of meal. The surface of this stone being as smooth as glass, there was not any other way of lifting it than by turning the hollow to the ground, there extending the arms along each side of the stone, and clasping the hands in the cavity. Young lads were always considered as deserving to be ranked among men, when they could lift the blue stone of King's Case. It always lay beside the well, till a few years ago, when some English dragoons encamped at that place wantonly broke it, since which the fragments have been kept by the freemen of Prestwick in a place of security. There is one of these charter-stones at the village of Old Daily, in Carrick, which has become more celebrated by the following event, which happened only a very few years ago:—The village of New Daily being now larger than the old place of the same name, the inhabitants insisted that the charter-stone should be removed from the old town to the new, but the people of Old Daily were unwilling to part with their ancient right. Demands and remonstrances were made on each side without effect, till at last, man, woman, and child, of both villages, marched out, and by one desperate engagement put an end to a war, the commencement of which no person then living remembered. Justice and victory, in this instance, being of the same party, the villagers of the old town of Daily now enjoy the pleasure of keeping the *blue-stane* unmolested. Ideal privileges are often attached to some of these stones. In Girvan,

if a man can set his back against one of the above description, he is supposed not liable to be arrested for debt, nor can cattle, it is imagined, be pointed as long as they are fastened to the same stone. That stones were often used as symbols to denote the right of possessing land, before the use of written documents became general in Scotland, is, I think, exceedingly probable. The charter-stone of Inverness is still kept with great care, set in a frame, and hooped with iron, at the market-place of that town. It is called by the inhabitants of that district Clack na Couddin. I think it is very likely that Carey has mentioned this stone in his poem of Craig Phaderick. This is only a conjecture, as I have never seen that work. While the famous marble chair was allowed to remain at Scoon, it was considered as the charter-stone of the kingdom of Scotland."

NOTE 25.

"Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,
My noble fathers loved of yore."—P. 130.

These mazers were large drinking-cups, or goblets. Mention of them occurs in a curious inventory of the treasure and jewels of James III., which will be published, with other curious documents of antiquity, by my friend, Mr. Thomas Thomson, D. Register of Scotland, under the title of "A Collection of Inventories, and other Records of the Royal Wardrobe, Jewel-House," &c. I copy the passage, in which mention is made of the mazers, and also of a habiliment, called "King Robert Bruce's serk," i.e., *shirt*, meaning, perhaps, his shirt of mail; although no other arms are mentioned in the inventory. It might have been a relic of more sanctified description, a penance shirt perhaps.

Extract from "Inventare of ane Parte of the Gold and Silver conyeit and unconyeit, Jewellis, and uther Stuff pertaining to Umquhile our Soverane Lords Fader, that he had in Depois the Tyme of his Deceis, and that come to the Handis of oure Soverane Lord that now is, M.CCCC.LXXXVIII."

"Memorandum fundin in a bandit kist like a gardeviant,¹ in the fyrst the grete chenye² of gold, contenand sevin score sex linkis.

Item, thre platis of silver.

Item, twelf saltatis.³

Item, fyftene dischois⁴ ouregilt.

¹ Gard-vin, or wine-cooler.

² Chain.

³ Salt-cellar, ancier tly the object of much curious workmanship. ⁴ Dishes.

Item, a grete gilt plate.

Item, twa grete bassingis¹ ouregilt.

Item, FOUR MASARIS, CALLED KING ROBERT THE BROGIS, with a cover.

Item, a grete cok maid of silver.

Item, the hede of silver of ane of the coveris of masar.

Item, a fair dialle.²

Item, twa kasis of knyffis.³

Item, a pare of auld knifflis.

Item, takin be the smyth that opinnit the lokkis, in gold fourty demyis.

Item, in Inglys grotis⁴ . . . xxiiii li. and the said silver given again to the takaris of hym.

Item, ressavit in the cloissat of Davidis tour, ane haly water-fat of silver, twa boxis, a cageat tume, a glas with rois-water, a dosoune of torchis, King ROBERT BRUCIS SERK."

The real use of the antiquarian's studies, is to bring the minute information which he collects to bear upon points of history. For example, in the inventory I have just quoted, there is given the contents of the *black kist*, or chest, belonging to James III., which was his strong box, and contained a quantity of treasure, in money and jewels, surpassing what might have been at the period expected of "poor Scotland's gear." This illustrates and authenticates a striking passage in the history of the house of Douglas, by Hume of Godscroft. The last Earl of Douglas (of the elder branch) had been reduced to monastic seclusion in the Abbey of Lindores, by James II. James III., in his distresses, would willingly have recalled him to public life, and made him his lieutenant. "But he," says Godscroft, "laden with years and old age, and weary of troubles, refused, saying, Sir, you have kept mee. and your *black coffer* in Sterling, too long, neither of us can doe you any good: I, because my friends have forsaken me, and my followers and dependers are fallen from me, betaking themselves to other masters; and your black trunk is too farre from you, and your enemies are between you and it: or (as others say) because there was in it a sort of black coyne, that the king had caused to be coyned by the advice of his courtiers; which moneyes (saith he) sir, if you had put out at the first, the people would have taken it; and if you had employed mee in due time I might have done you service. But now there is none that will take notice of me, nor meddle with your money." HUME's *History of the House of Douglas*, fol. Edin. 1644, p. 206.

¹ Basins.

² Dials.

³ Cases of knives.

⁴ English groats.

NOTE 26.

When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale.—P. 133.

The "good Lord James of Douglas," during these commotions, often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains. As a reward to his patriotism, it is said to have been prophesied, that how often soever Douglas Castle should be destroyed, it should always again arise more magnificent from its ruins. Upon one of these occasions he used fearful cruelty, causing all the store of provisions, which the English had laid up in his castle, to be heaped together, bursting the wine and beer-casks among the wheat and flour, slaughtering the cattle upon the same spot, and upon the top of the whole cutting the throats of the English prisoners. This pleasantry of the "good Lord James" is commemorated under the name of the *Douglas's Larder*.

NOTE 27.

*In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.*—P. 140.

The arrangements adopted by King Robert for the decisive battle of Bannockburn, are given very distinctly by Barbour, and form an edifying lesson to tacticians. Yet, till commented upon by Lord Hailes, this important passage of history has been generally and strangely misunderstood by historians. I will here endeavour to detail it fully.

Two days before the battle, Bruce selected the field of action, and took post there with his army, consisting of about 30,000 disciplined men, and about half the number of disorderly attendants upon the camp. The ground was called the New Park of Stirling; it was partly open, and partly broken by copses of wood and marshy ground. He divided his regular forces into four divisions. Three of these occupied a front line, separated from each other, yet sufficiently near for the purposes of communication. The fourth division formed a reserve. The line extended in a north-easterly direction from the brook of Bannock, which was so rugged and broken as to cover the right flank effectually, to the village of Saint Ninian's, probably in the line of the present road from Stirling to Kilsyth. Edward Bruce commanded the right wing, which was strengthened by a strong body of cavalry under Keith, the Mareschal of Scotland, to whom was committed the important charge of attack-

ing the English archers ; Douglas, and the young Steward of Scotland, led the central wing ; and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, the left wing. The King himself commanded the fourth division, which lay in reserve behind the others. The royal standard was pitched, according to tradition, in a stone, having a round hole for its reception, and thence called the Bore-stone. It is still shown on the top of a small eminence, called Brock's-brae, to the south-west of St. Ninian's. His main body thus disposed, King Robert sent the followers of the camp, fifteen thousand and upwards in number, to the eminence in rear of his army, called from that circumstance the *Gillies' (i.e., the servants') Hill*.

The military advantages of this position were obvious. The Scottish left flank, protected by the brook of Bannock, could not be turned ; or, if that attempt were made, a movement by the reserve might have covered it. Again, the English could not pass the Scottish army, and move towards Stirling, without exposing their flank to be attacked while in march.

If, on the other hand, the Scottish line had been drawn up east and west, and facing to the southward, as affirmed by Buchanan, and adopted by Mr. Nimmo, the author of the *History of Stirlingshire*, there appears nothing to have prevented the English approaching upon the carse, or level ground, from Falkirk, either from turning the Scottish left flank, or from passing their position, if they preferred it, without coming to an action, and moving on to the relief of Stirling. And the Gillies' Hill, if this less probable hypothesis be adopted, would be situated, not in the rear, as allowed by all the historians, but upon the left flank of Bruce's army. The only objection to the hypothesis above laid down, is, that the left flank of Bruce's army was thereby exposed to a sally from the garrison of Stirling. But, 1st, the garrison were bound to neutrality by terms of Mowbray's treaty ; and Barbour even seems to censure, as a breach of faith, some secret assistance which they rendered their countrymen upon the eve of battle, in placing temporary bridges of doors and spars over the pools of water in the carse, to enable them to advance to the charge.¹ 2ndly, Had this not been the case, the strength of the garrison was probably not sufficient to excite apprehension. 3rdly, The adverse hypothesis leaves the rear of the Scottish army as much exposed to the Stirling garrison, as the left flank would be in the case supposed.

¹ An assistance which (by the way) could not have been rendered, had not the English approached from the south-east ; since, had their march been due north, the whole Scottish army must have been between them and the garrison.

It only remains to notice the nature of the ground in front of Bruce's line of battle. Being part of a park, or chase, it was considerably interrupted with trees; and an extensive marsh, still visible, in some places rendered it inaccessible, and in all of difficult approach. More to the northward, where the natural impediments were fewer, Bruce fortified his position against cavalry, by digging a number of pits so close together, says Barbour, as to resemble the cells in a honey-comb. They were a foot in breadth, and between two and three feet deep, many rows of them being placed one behind the other. They were slightly covered with brushwood and green sods, so as not to be obvious to an impetuous enemy.

All the Scottish army were on foot, excepting a select body of cavalry stationed with Edward Bruce on the right wing, under the immediate command of Sir Robert Keith, the Marshal of Scotland, who were destined for the important service of charging and dispersing the English archers.

Thus judiciously posted, in a situation fortified both by art and nature, Bruce awaited the attack of the English.

NOTE 28.

*What train of dust, with trumpet-sound,
And glimmering spears, is wheeling round,
Our leftward flank? ——— P. 147.*

While the van of the English army advanced, a detached body attempted to relieve Stirling. Lord Hailes gives the following account of this manœuvre and the result, which is accompanied by circumstances highly characteristic of the chivalrous manners of the age, and displays that generosity which reconciles us even to their ferocity upon other occasions.

Bruce had enjoined Randolph, who commanded the left wing of his army, to be vigilant in preventing any advanced parties of the English from throwing succours into the castle of Stirling.

"Eight hundred horsemen, commanded by Sir Robert Clifford, were detached from the English army; they made a circuit by the low grounds to the east, and approached the castle. The king perceived their motions, and coming up to Randolph, angrily exclaimed, 'Thoughtless man! you have suffered the enemy to pass.' Randolph hastened to repair his fault, or perish. As he advanced, the English cavalry wheeled to attack him. Randolph drew up his troops in a circular form, with their spears resting on the ground, and protended

on every side. At the first onset, Sir William Daynecourt, an English commander of distinguished note, was slain. The enemy, far superior in numbers to Randolph, environed him, and pressed hard on his little band. Douglas saw his jeopardy, and requested the king's permission to go and succour him. 'You shall not move from your ground,' cried the king; 'let Randolph extricate himself as he best may. I will not alter my order of battle, and lose the advantage of my position.'—'In truth,' replied Douglas, 'I cannot stand by and see Randolph perish; and, therefore, with your leave, I must aid him.' The king unwillingly consented, and Douglas flew to the assistance of his friend. While approaching, he perceived that the English were falling into disorder, and that the perseverance of Randolph had prevailed over their impetuous courage. 'Halt,' cried Douglas, 'those brave men have repulsed the enemy; let us not diminish their glory by sharing it.'—DAIRYMPLE'S *Annals of Scotland*, 4to, Edinburgh, 1779, pp. 44, 45.

Two large stones erected at the north end of the village of Newhouse, about a quarter of a mile from the south part of Stirling, ascertain the place of this memorable skirmish. The circumstance tends, were confirmation necessary, to support the opinion of Lord Hailes, that the Scottish line had Stirling on its left flank. It will be remembered that Randolph commanded infantry, Daynecourt cavalry. Supposing, therefore, according to the vulgar hypothesis, that the Scottish line was drawn up, facing to the south, in the line of the brook of Bannock, and consequently that Randolph was stationed with his left flank resting upon Milntown bog, it is morally impossible that his infantry, moving from that position, with whatever celerity, could cut off from Stirling a body of cavalry who had already passed St. Ninians,¹ or, in other words, were already between them and the town. Whereas, supposing Randolph's left to have approached St. Ninians, the short movement to Newhouse could easily be executed, so as to intercept the English in the manner described.

NOTE 29.

*"Forth, Marshal, on the peasant foe !
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose !"*—P. 152.

The English archers commenced the attack with their usual

¹ Barbour says expressly, they avoided the New Park, (where Bruce's army lay), and held "well neath the Kirk," which can only mean St. Ninians.

bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided. A small but select body of cavalry were detached from the right, under command of Sir Robert Keith. They rounded, as I conceive, the marsh called Milntown bog, and, keeping the firm ground, charged the left flank and rear of the English archers. As the bowmen had no spears, nor long weapons, fit to defend themselves against horse, they were instantly thrown into disorder, and spread through the whole English army a confusion, from which they never fairly recovered.

Although the success of this manœuvre was evident, it is very remarkable that the Scottish generals do not appear to have profited by the lesson. Almost every subsequent battle which they lost against England was decided by the archers, to whom the close and compact array of the Scottish phalanx afforded an exposed and unresisting mark. The bloody battle of Halidoun-hill, fought scarce twenty years afterwards, was so completely gained by the archers, that the English are said to have lost only one knight, one esquire, and a few foot-soldiers. At the battle of Neville's Cross, in 1346, where David II. was defeated and made prisoner, John de Graham, observing the loss which the Scots sustained from the English bowmen, offered to charge and disperse them, if a hundred men-at-arms were put under his command. "*But, to confess the truth,*" says Fordun, "*he could not procure a single horseman for the service proposed.*" Of such little use is experience in war, where its results are opposed by habit or prejudice.

NOTE 30.

*To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear.—P. 159.*

The followers of the Scottish camp observed, from the Gillies' Hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and, prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary manner, such arms as they found nearest, fastened sheets to tent-poles and lances, and showed themselves like a new army advancing to battle.

The unexpected apparition, of what seemed a new army, completed the confusion which already prevailed among the English, who fled in every direction, and were pursued with immense slaughter. The brook of Bannock, according to Barbour, was so choked with the bodies of men and horses, that it might have been passed dry-shod. The followers of

the Scottish camp fell upon the disheartened fugitives, and added to the confusion and slaughter. Many were driven into the Forth, and perished there, which, by the way, could hardly have happened, had the armies been drawn up east and west, since, in that case, to get at the river, the English fugitives must have fled through the victorious army. About a short mile from the field of battle is a place called the Bloody Folds: Here the Earl of Gloucester is said to have made a stand, and died gallantly at the head of his own military tenants and vassals. He was much regretted by both sides; and it is said the Scottish would gladly have saved his life, but, neglecting to wear his surcoat with armorial bearings over his armour, he fell unknown, after his horse had been stabbed with spears.

Sir Marmaduke Twenge, an English knight, contrived to conceal himself during the fury of the pursuit, and when it was somewhat slackened, approached King Robert. "Whose prisoner are you, Sir Marmaduke?" said Bruce, to whom he was personally known. "Yours, sir," answered the knight. "I receive you," answered the king, and, treating him with the utmost courtesy, loaded him with gifts, and dismissed him without ransom. The other prisoners were all well treated. There might be policy in this, as Bruce would naturally wish to acquire the good opinion of the English barons, who were at this time at great variance with their king. But it also well accords with his high chivalrous character.

NOTE 31.

O! give their hapless prince his due.—P. 160.

Edward II., according to the best authorities, showed, in the fatal field of Bannockburn, personal gallantry not unworthy of his great sire and greater son. He remained on the field till forced away by the Earl of Pembroke, when all was lost. He then rode to the Castle of Stirling, and demanded admittance; but the governor, remonstrating upon the imprudence of shutting himself up in that fortress, which must so soon surrender, he assembled around his person five hundred men-at-arms, and, avoiding the field of battle and the victorious army, fled towards Linlithgow, pursued by Douglas with about sixty horse. They were augmented by Sir Lawrence Abernethy with twenty more, whom Douglas met in the Torwood upon their way to join the English army, and whom he easily persuaded to desert the defeated monarch, and to assist in the pursuit. They hung upon Edward's flight as far as Dunbar,

too few in number to assail him with effect, but enough to harass his retreat so constantly, that whoever fell an instant behind, was instantly slain, or made prisoner. Edward's ignominious flight terminated at Durbar, where the Earl of March, who still professed allegiance to him, "received him full gently." From thence, the monarch of so great an empire, and the late commander of so gallant and numerous an army, escaped to Bamborough in a fishing vessel.

Bruce lost no time in directing the thunders of parliamentary censure against such part of his subjects as did not return to their natural allegiance after the battle of Bannockburn.

NOTE 32.

*Nor for De Argentine alone,
Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.*—P. 162.

The remarkable circumstances attending the death of De Argentine have been already noticed (Note No. 8.) Besides this renowned warrior, there fell many representatives of the noblest houses in England, which never sustained a more bloody and disastrous defeat. Barbour says that two hundred pairs of gilded spurs were taken from the field of battle; and that some were left the author can bear witness, who has in his possession a curious antique spur, dug up in the morass, not long since.

"It wes forsuth a gret ferly,
To se samyn ¹ sa fele dede lie.
Twa hundre payr of spuris reid,²
War tane of knichtis that war deid."

I am now to take my leave of Barbour, not without a sincere wish that the public may encourage the undertaking of my friend Dr. Jamieson, who has issued proposals for publishing an accurate edition of his poem, and of Blind Harry's Wallace.³ The only good edition of *The Bruce* was published by Mr. Pinkerton, in 3 vols., in 1790; and, the learned editor having had no personal access to consult the manuscript, it is not without errors; and it has besides become scarce. Of Wallace there is no tolerable edition; yet these two poems do no small honour to the early state of Scottish poetry, and *The Bruce* is justly regarded as containing authentic historical facts.

¹ Together.

² Red, or gilded.

³ Dr. Jamieson's *Bruce*, published, along with *Blind Harry's Wallace*, Edin. 1826. 2 vols., 4to.—ED.

The following list of the slain at Bannockburn, extracted from the continuator of Trivet's Annals, will show the extent of the national calamity.

LIST OF THE SLAIN.

Barons and Knights Bannerets.
Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester,

Robert de Clifford,
Payan Tylet,
William Le Mareschal,
John Comyn,
William de Vescey,
John de Montfort,
Nicolas de Hasteleigh,
William Dayncourt,
Ægidius de Argenteyne,
Edmond Comyn,
John Lovel, (the rich,)
Edmund de Hastinge,
Milo de Stapleton,
Simon Ward,

Robert de Felton,
Michael Poyning,
Edmund Maulley.

Knights.

Henry de Boun,
Thomas de Ufford,
John de Elsingfelde,
John de Harcourt,
Walter de Hakelut,
Philip de Courtenay,
Hugo de Scales,
Radulph de Beauchamp,
John de Penbrigge,
With thirty-three others of the same rank, not named.

PRISONERS.

Barons and Baronets.
Henry de Boun, Earl of Hereford,

Lord John Giffard,
William de Latimer,
Maurice de Berkley,
Ingelram de Umfraville,
Marmaduke de Twenge,
John de Wyletone,
Robert de Maulee,
Henry Fitz-Hugh,
Thomas de Gray,
Walter de Beauchamp,
Richard de Charon,
John de Wevelmton,
Robert de Nevil,
John de Segrave,
Gilbert Peeche,
John de Clavering,
Antony de Lucy,
Radulph de Camys,

John de Evere,
Andrew de Abremhyn.

Knights.

Thomas de Berkeley,
The son of Roger Tyrrel,
Anselm de Mareschal,
Giles de Beauchamp,
John de Cyfrewast,
John Bluwet,
Roger Corbet,
Gilbert de Boun,
Bartholomew de Enefeld,
Thomas de Ferrers,
Radulph & Thomas Bottetort,
John & Nicholas de Kingstone,
(brothers,)
William Lovel,
Henry de Wileton,
Baldwin de Frevill,
John de Clivedon,¹

¹ Supposed Clinton.

Knights (continued).

Adomar la Zouche,	Robert Beaupel, (the son,)
John de Merewode,	John Mautravers, (the son,)
John Maule, ¹	William and William Giffard,
Thomas and Odo Lele Erce- kene,	and thirty-four other knights, not named by the historian.

And in sum there were there slain, along with the Earl of Gloucester, forty-two barons and bannerets. The number of earls, barons, and bannerets made captive, was twenty-two, and sixty-eight knights. Many clerks and esquires were also there slain or taken. Roger de Northburge, keeper of the king's signet, (*Custos Targie Domini Regis*.) was made prisoner with his two clerks, Roger de Wakenfelde and Thomas de Switon, upon which the king caused a seal to be made, and entitled it his *privy seal*, to distinguish the same from the signet so lost. The Earl of Hereford was exchanged against Bruce's queen, who had been detained in captivity ever since the year 1306. The *Targia*, or signet, was restored to England through the intercession of Ralph de Monthermer, ancestor of Lord Moira, who is said to have found favour in the eyes of the Scottish king.—*Continuation of TRIVET's Annals, Hall's edit. Oxford, 1712, vol. ii., p. 14.*

Such were the immediate consequences of the field of Bannockburn. Its more remote effects, in completely establishing the national independence of Scotland, afford a boundless field for speculation.

¹ Maule.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

*Quid dignum memorare tuis, Hispania, terris,
Vox humana valet !*———CLAUDIAN.

TO
JOHN WHITMORE, Esq.,

AND TO THE
COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR RELIEF OF THE PORTUGUESE
SUFFERERS, IN WHICH HE PRESIDES,

THIS POEM,

(THE VISION OF DON RODERICK,)

COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND
UNDER THEIR MANAGEMENT,

IS

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

WALTER SCOTT.

PREFACE

TO

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.¹

THE following Poem is founded upon a Spanish Tradition, particularly detailed in the Notes; but bearing, in general, that Don Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain, when the Invasion of the Moors was impending, had the temerity to descend into an ancient vault, near Toledo, the opening of which had been denounced as fatal to the Spanish Monarchy. The legend adds, that his rash curiosity was mortified by an emblematical representation of those Saracens who, in the year 711. defeated him in battle, and reduced Spain under their dominion. I have presumed to prolong the Vision of the Revolutions of Spain down to the present eventful crisis of the Peninsula; and to divide it, by a supposed change of scene, into THREE PERIODS. The FIRST of these represents the Invasion of the Moors, the Defeat and Death of Roderick, and closes with the peaceful occupation of the country by the Victors. The SECOND PERIOD embraces the state of the Peninsula, when the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the East and West Indies had raised to the highest pitch the renown of their arms; sullied, however, by superstition and cruelty. An allusion to the inhumanities of the Inquisition terminates this picture. The LAST PART of the

¹ The Vision of Don Roderick appeared in 4to, in June, 1811; and in the course of the same year was also inserted in the 2nd volume of the Edinburgh Annual Register—which work was the property of Sir Walter Scott's then Publishers, Messrs John Ballantyne and Co.

Poem opens with the state of Spain previous to the unparalleled treachery of BONAPARTE; gives a sketch of the usurpation attempted upon that unsuspecting and friendly kingdom, and terminates with the arrival of the British succours. It may be farther proper to mention, that the object of the Poem is less to commemorate or detail particular incidents, than to exhibit a general and impressive picture of the several periods brought upon the stage.

I am too sensible of the respect due to the Public, especially by one who has already experienced more than ordinary indulgence, to offer any apology for the inferiority of the poetry to the subject it is chiefly designed to commemorate. Yet I think it proper to mention, that while I was hastily executing a work, written for a temporary purpose, and on passing events, the task was most cruelly interrupted by the successive deaths of LORD PRESIDENT BLAIR,¹ and LORD VISCOUNT MELVILLE. In those distinguished characters, I had not only to regret persons whose lives were most important to Scotland, but also whose notice and patronage honoured my entrance upon active life; and, I may add, with melancholy pride, who permitted my more advanced age to claim no common share in their friendship. Under such interruptions, the following verses, which my best and happiest efforts must have left far unworthy of their theme, have, I am myself sensible, an appearance of negligence and incoherence, which, in other circumstances, I might have been able to remove.

EDINBURGH, June 24, 1811.

¹ The Right Hon. Robert Blair of Avontoun, President of the Court of Session, was the son of the Rev. Robert Blair, author of "The Grave." After long filling the office of Solicitor-General in Scotland with high distinction, he was elevated to the Presidency in 1808. He died very suddenly on the 20th May, 1811, in the 70th year of his age; and his intimate friend, Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville, having gone into Edinburgh on purpose to attend his remains to the grave, was taken ill not less suddenly, and died there the very hour that the funeral took place, on the 28th of the same month.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

LIVES there a strain, whose sounds of mounting fire
May rise distinguish'd o'er the din of war ;
Or died it with yon Master of the Lyre,
Who sung beleaguer'd Ilion's evil star ?
Such, WELLINGTON, might reach thee from afar,
Wafting its descant wide o'er Ocean's range ;
Nor shuts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
All as it swell'd 'twixt each loud trumpet-change,
That clangs to Britain victory, to Portugal revenge !

II.

Yes ! such a strain, with all o'er-pouring measure,
Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
Each voice of fear or triumph, woe or pleasure,
That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around ;
The thund'ring cry of hosts with conquest crown'd,
The female shriek, the ruin'd peasant's moan,
The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
The foil'd oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
A Nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown.

III.

But we, weak minstrels of a laggard day,
 Skill'd but to imitate an elder page,
 Timid and raptureless, can we repay
 The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
 Thou givest our lyres a theme, that might engage
 Those that could send thy name o'er sea and land,
 While sea and land shall last ; for Homer's rage
 A theme ; a theme for Milton's mighty hand—
 How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band !

IV.

Ye mountains stern ! within whose rugged breast
 The friends of Scottish freedom found repose ;
 Ye torrents ! whose hoarse sounds have soothed their
 rest,
 Returning from the field of vanquish'd foes ;
 Say have ye lost each wild majestic close,
 That erst the choir of Bards or Druids flung ;
 What time their hymn of victory arose,
 And Cattraeth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harp'd, and grey-hair'd Llywarch
 sung !¹

¹ This locality may startle those readers who do not recollect, that much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the Principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England, and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattraeth, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed by the learned Dr. Leyden to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick Forest. It is known to the English reader by the paraphrase of Gray, beginning,

“ Had I but the torrent's might,
 With headlong rage and wild affright,” &c.

But it is not so generally known that the champions, mourned in this beautiful dirge, were the British inhabitants of Edinburgh, who were cut off by the Saxons of Deiria, or Northumberland, about the latter part of the sixth century.—See Turner's “History of the Anglo-Saxons,” edition 1799, vol. i. p. 222.

V.

O ! if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
As sure your changefu' gales seem oft to say,
When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
Like trumpet-jubilee, or harp's wild away ;
If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
Then lend the note to him has loved you long !
Who pious gather'd each tradition grey,
That floats your solitary wastes along,
And with affection vain gave them new voice in song.

VI.

For not till now, how oft so'er the task
Of truant verse hath lighten'd graver care,
From Muse or Sylvan was he wont to ask,
In phrase poetic, inspiration fair ;
Careless he gave his numbers to the air,
They came unsought for, if applauses came ;
Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer ;
Let but his verse befit a hero's fame,
Immortal be the verse!--forgot the poet's name.

VII.

Hark, from yon misty cairn their answer tost :
" Minstrel ! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
Capricious-swelling now, may soon be lost,
Like the light flickering of a cottage fire ;
If to such task presumptuous thou aspire,
Seek not from us the meed to warrior due :
Age after age has gather'd son to sire,
Since our grey cliffs the din of conflict knew,
Or, pealing through our vales, victorious bugles blew.

VIII.

"Decay'd our old traditionary lore,
 Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
 By milk-maid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
 Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted
 spring ;¹
 Save where their legends grey-hair'd shepherds sing,
 That now scarce win a listening ear but thine.
 Of feuds obscure, and Border ravaging,
 And rugged deeds recount in rugged line,
 Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne.

IX.

"No ! search romantic lands, where the near Sun
 Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,
 Where the rude villager, his labour done,
 In verse spontaneous² chant some favour'd name,
 Whether Olalia's charms his tribute claim,
 Her eye of diamond, and her locks of jet ;
 Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,³
 He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
 Old Albion's red claymore, green Erin's bayonet !

¹ A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire. A copious fountain upon the ridge of Minchmore, called the Cheesewell, is supposed to be sacred to these fanciful spirits, and it was customary to propitiate them by throwing in something upon passing it. A pin was the usual oblation ; and the ceremony is still sometimes practised, though rather in jest than earnest.

² The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people. It is mentioned by Baretti and other travellers.

³ Over a name sacred for ages to heroic verse, a poet may be allowed to exercise some power. I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprise the Southern reader of its legitimate sound ;—Grahame being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a dissyllable.

X.

“Explore those regions, where the flinty crest
Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
Where in the proud Alhambra's ruin'd breast
Barbaric monuments of pomp repose ;
Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
Than the fierce Moor, float o'er Toledo's fane,
From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain.

XI.

“There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
Still lightens in the sun-burnt native's eye ;
The stately port, slow step, and visage dark,
Still mark enduring pride and constancy.
And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,
Iberia ! oft thy crestless peasantry
Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
Have seen, yet dauntless stood—'gainst fortune fought
and died.

XII.

“And cherish'd still by that unchanging race,
Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine ;
Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
Legend and vision, prophecy and sign ;
Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
With Gothic imagery of darker shade,
Forming a model meet for minstrel line.
Go, seek such theme !”—The Mountain Spirit said :
With filial awe I heard—I heard, and I obey'd.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

I.

REARING their crests amid the cloudless skies,
And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
As from a trembling lake of silver white.
Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
Of the broad burial-ground outstretch'd below,
And nought disturbs the silence of the night;
All sleeps in sullen shade, or silver glow,
All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow.

II.

All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
Or, distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp;
Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride,
To guard the limits of King Roderick's camp.
For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
Which glimmer'd back, against the moon's fair lamp,
Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
And standards proudly pitch'd, and warders arm'd
between.

III.

But of their Monarch's person keeping ward,
Since last the deep-mouth'd bell of vespers toll'd,
The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
The post beneath the proud Cathedral hold :
A bard unlike their Gothic sires of old
Who, for the cap of steel and iron mace,
Bear slender darts, and casques bedeck'd with gold,
While silver-studded belts their shoulders grace,
Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place.

IV.

In the light language of an idle court,
They murmured at their master's long delay,
And held his lengthen'd orisons in sport :—
“ What ! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
To wear in shrift and prayer the night away ?
And are his hours in such dull penance past,
For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay ? ”^{*}
Then to the east their weary eyes they cast,
And wish'd the lingering dawn would glimmer forth at
last.

V.

But, far within, Toledo's Prelate lent
An ear of fearful wonder to the King ;
The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
So long that sad confession witnessing :
For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
Such as are loathly utter'd to the air,
When Fear, Remorse, and Shame, the bosom wring,
And Guilt his secret burden cannot bear,
And Conscience seeks in speech a respite from Despair.

^{*} See Note 1.

VI.

Full on the Prelate's face, and silver hair,
The stream of failing light was feebly roll'd :
But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
Was shadow'd by his hand and mantle's fold.
While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
Proud Alaric's descendant could not brook,
That mortal man his bearing should behold,
Or boast that he had seen, when Conscience shook,
Fear tame a monarch's brow, Remorse a warrior's look.

VII.

The old man's faded cheek wax'd yet more pale,
As many a secret sad the King bewray'd ;
As sign and glance eked out the unfinish'd tale,
When in the midst his faltering whisper staid.—
“ Thus royal Witiza¹ was slain,”—he said ;
“ Yet, holy Father, deem not it was I.”
Thus still Ambition strives her crimes to shade.—
“ Oh rather deem 'twas stern necessity !
Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die.

VIII.

“ And if Florinda's shrieks alarm'd the air,
If she invoked her absent sire in vain,
And on her knees implored that I would spare,
Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash refrain !—
All is not as it seems—the female train
Know by their bearing to disguise their mood : ”—
But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,
Sent to the Monarch's cheek the burning blood—
He stay'd his speech abrupt—and up the Prelate stood.

¹ The predecessor of Roderick upon the Spanish throne, and slain by his connivance, as is affirmed by Rodriguez of Toledo, the father of Spanish history.

IX.

"O harden'd offspring of an iron race!
What of thy crimes, Don Roderick, shall I say?
What alms, or prayers, or penance, can efface
Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!
For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,
Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his boast?
How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,
Unless, in mercy to yon Christian host,
He spare the shepherd, lest the guiltless sheep be lost."—

X.

Then kindled the dark Tyrant in his mood,
And to his brow returned its dauntless gloom;
"And welcome then," he cried, "be blood for blood,
For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!
Yet will I know whence come they, or by whom.
Show, for thou canst—give forth the fated key,
And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room,
Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
His nation's future fates a Spanish King shall see."—¹

XI.

"Ill-fated Prince! recal the desperate word,
Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford
Never to former Monarch entrance-way;
Nor shall it ever open, old records say,
Save to a King, the last of all his line.
What time his empire totters to decay,
And treason digs, beneath, her fatal mine,
And, high above, impends avenging wrath divine."—

¹ See Note 2.

XII.

“Prelate ! a Monarch’s fate brooks no delay ;
Lead on ! ”—The ponderous key the old man took,
And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,
Then on an ancient gateway bent his look !
And, as the key the desperate King essay’d,
Low mutter’d thunders the Cathedral shook,
And twice he stopp’d, and twice new effort made,
Till the huge bolts roll’d back, and the loud hinges
bray’d.

XIII.

Long, large, and lofty, was that vaulted hall ;
Roof, walls, and floor, were all of marble stone,
Of polished marble, black as funeral pall,
Carved o’er with signs and characters unknown.
A paly light, as of the dawning, shone
Through the sad bounds, but whence they could not
spy ;
For window to the upper air was none ;
Yet, by that light, Don Roderick could descry
Wonders that ne’er till then were seen by mortal eye.

XIV.

Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place ;
Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.
Moulded they seem’d for kings of giant race,
That lived and sinn’d before the avenging flood ;
This grasp’d a scythe, that rested on a mace ;
This spread his wings for flight, that pondering
stood,
Each stubborn seem’d and stern, immutable of mood.

XV.

Fix'd was the right-hand Giant's brazen look
Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
As if its ebb he measured by a book,
Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand ;
In which was wrote of many a falling land,
Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven :
And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand—
“ Lo, DESTINY and TIME ! to whom by Heaven
The guidance of the earth is for a season given.”—

XVI.

Even while they read, the sand-glass wastes away ;
And, as the last and lagging grains did creep,
That right-hand Giant 'gan his club upsway,
As one that startles from a heavy sleep.
Full on the upper wall the mace's sweep
At once descended with the force of thunder,
And hurtling down at once, in crumbled heap.
The marble boundary was rent asunder,
And gave to Roderick's view new sights of fear and
wonder.

XVII.

For they might spy, beyond that mighty breach,
Realms as of Spain in vision'd prospect laid,
Castles and towers, in due proportion each,
As by some skilful artist's hand pourtray'd :
Here, crossed by many a wild Sierra's shade,
And boundless plains that tire the traveller's eye ;
There, rich with vineyard and with olive glade,
Or deep-embrown'd by forests huge and high,
Or wash'd by mighty streams, that slowly ~~murmur'd~~ by.

XVIII.

And here, as erst upon the antique stage
 Pass'd forth the band of masquers trimly led,
 In various forms, and various equipage,
 While fitting strains the hearer's fancy fed ;
 So, to sad Roderick's eye in order spread,
 Successive pageants fill'd that mystic scene,
 Showing the fate of battles ere they bled,
 And issue of events that had not been ;
 And, ever and anon, strange sounds were heard between.

XIX.

First shrill'd an unrepeat'd female shriek !—
 It seem'd as if Don Roderick knew the call,
 For the bold blood was blanching in his cheek.—
 Then answer'd kettle-drum and atabal,
 Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the ear appal,
 The Tecbir war-cry, and the Lelie's yell,¹
 Ring wildly dissonant along the hall.
 Needs not to Roderick their dread import tell—
 “The Moor !” he cried, “the Moor !—ring out the Tocsin
 bell !

XX.

“They come ! they come ! I see the groaning lands
 White with the turbans of each Arab horde ;
 Swart Zaarah joins her misbelieving bands,
 Alla and Mahomet their battle-word,
 The choice they yield, the Koran or the Sword—
 See how the Christians rush to arms amain !—

¹ The Tecbir (derived from the words *Alla acbar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens.

The *Lelie*, well known to the Christians during the crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahomedan confession of faith. It is twice used in poetry by my friend Mr. W. Stewart Rose, in the Romance of Partenopex, and in the Crusade of St. Lewis.

In yonder shout the voice of conflict roar'd,
The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain—
Now, God and Saint Iago strike, for the good cause of
Spain!

XXI.

“By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians yield!—
Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—
Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!¹
But never was she turn'd from battle-line:
Lo! where the recreant spurs o'er stock and stone!—
Curses pursue the slave, and wrath divine!
Rivers ingulf him!”—“Hush,” in shuddering tone,
The Prelate said; “rash Prince, yon vision'd form's thine
own.”

XXII.

Just then, a torrent cross'd the flier's course;
The dangerous ford the Kingly Likeness tried;
But the deep eddies whelm'd both man and horse,
Swept like benighted peasant down the tide;
And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,
As numerous as their native locust band;
Berber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,
With naked scimitars mete out the land,
And for the bondsmen base the freeborn natives brand.

XXIII.

Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose
The loveliest maidens of the Christian line;

¹ Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, Archbishop of Toledo, invited, in 713, Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif, who bequeathed the well-known name of Gibraltar (*Gebel al Tair*), or the mountain of Tarik) to the place of his landing. He was joined by Count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714, they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army, to give them battle.

Then, menials, to their misbelieving foes,
Castile's young nobles held forbidden wine ;
Then, too, the holy Cross, salvation's sign,
By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
And the deep aisles of the polluted shrine
Echo'd, for holy hymn and organ-tone,
The Santon's frantic dance, the Fakir's gibbering moan.

XXIV.

How fares Don Roderick ?—E'en as one who spies
Flames dart their glare o'er midnight's sable woof,
And hears around his children's piercing cries,
And sees the pale assistants stand aloof ;
While cruel Conscience brings him bitter proof,
His folly, or his crime, have caused his grief ;
And while above him nods the crumbling roof,
He curses earth and Heaven—himself in chief—
Desperate of earthly aid, despairing Heaven's relief !

XXV.

That scythe-arm'd Giant turn'd his fatal glass,
And twilight on the landscape closed her wings ;
Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass,
And in their stead rebeck or timbrel rings ;
And to the sound the bell-deck'd dancer springs,
Bazaars resound as when their marts are met,
In tourney light the Moor his jerrid flings,
And on the land as evening seem'd to set,
The Imaum's chant was heard from mosque or minaret.

XXVI.

So pass'd that pageant. Ere another came,
The visionary scene was wrapp'd in smoke,

Whose sulph'rous wreaths were cross'd by sheets of
flame ;
With every flash a bolt explosive broke,
Till Roderick deem'd the fiends had burst their yoke,
And waved 'gainst heaven the infernal gonfalone !
For War a new and dreadful language spoke,
Never by ancient warrior heard or known ;
Lightning and smoke her breath, and thunder was her
tone.

XXVII.

From the dim landscape roll the clouds away—
The Christians have regain'd their heritage !
Before the Cross has waned the Crescent's ray
And many a monastery decks the stage,
And lofty church, and low-brow'd hermitage.
The land obeys a Hermit and a Knight,—
The Genii those of Spain for many an age ;
This clad in sackcloth, that in armour bright,
And that was VALOUR named, this BIGOTRY was hight.

XXVIII.

VALOUR was harness'd like a Chief of old,
Arm'd at all points, and prompt for knightly gest ;
His sword was temper'd in the Ebro cold,
Morena's eagle-plume adorn'd his crest,
The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast.
Fierce he stepp'd forward and flung down his gage ;
As if of mortal kind to brave the best.
Him follow'd his Companion, dark and sage,
As he, my Master, sung the dangerous Archimage.

XXIX.

Haughty of heart and brow the Warrior came,
In look and language proud as proud might be,

Vaunting his lordship, lineage, fights, and fame :
Yet was that barefoot Monk more proud than he :
And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
Till ermined Age and Youth in arms renown'd,
Honouring his scourge and hair-cloth, meekly kiss'd the
ground.

XXX.

And thus it chanced that VALOUR, peerless knight,
Who ne'er to King or Kaiser veil'd his crest,
Victorious still in bull-feast or in fight,
Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
Stoop'd ever to that Anchoret's behest ;
Nor reason'd of the right, nor of the wrong,
But at his bidding laid the lance in rest,
And wrought fell deeds the troubled world along,
For he was fierce as brave, and pitiless as strong.

XXXI.

Oft his proud galleys sought some new-found world,
That latest sees the sun, or first the morn ;
Still at that Wizard's feet their spoils he hurl'd,—
Ingots of ore from rich Potosi borne,
Crowns by Caciques, aigrettes by Omrahs worn,
Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and foul ;
Idols of gold from heathen temples torn,
Bedabbled all with blood.—With grisly scowl
The Hermit mark'd the stains, and smiled beneath his
cowl.

XXXII.

Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
Tribute to Heaven of gratitude and praise ;
And at his word the choral hymns awake,
And many a hand the silver censer sways.

But with the incense-breath these censers raise,
Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire ;
The groans of prison'd victims mar the lays,
And shrieks of agony confound the quire ;
While, mid the mingled sounds, the darken'd scenes
expire.

XXXIII.

Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
As once again revolved that measured sand ;
Such sounds as when, or silvan dance prepared,
Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band ;
When for the light bolero ready stand
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met,
He conscious of his broider'd cap and band,
She of her netted locks and light corsette,
Each tiptoe perch'd to spring, and shake the castanet.

XXXIV.

And well such strains the opening scene became ;
For VALOUR had relax'd his ardent look,
And at a lady's feet, like lion tame,
Lay stretch'd, full loath the weight of arms to brook ;
And soften'd BIGORRY, upon his book,
Patter'd a task of little good or ill :
But the blithe peasant plied his pruning-hook,
Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
And rung from village-green the merry seguidille.

XXXV.

Grey Royalty, grown impotent of toil,
Let the grave sceptre slip his lazy hold ;
And, careless, saw his rule become the spoil
Of a loose Female and her minion bold.

But peace was on the cottage and the fold,
From court intrigue, from bickering faction far ;
Beneath the chestnut-tree Love's tale was told,
And to the tinkling of the light guitar,
Sweet stoop'd the western sun, sweet rose the evening
star.

XXXVI.

As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand,
When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
A while, perchance, bedeck'd with colours sheen,
While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
Till darker folds obscured the blue serene,
And blotted heaven with one broad sable cloud,
Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds howl'd
aloud :—

XXXVII.

Even so, upon that peaceful scene was pour'd,
Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign band,
And HE, their Leader, wore in sheath his sword,
And offer'd peaceful front and open hand,
Veiling the perjured treachery he plann'd,
By friendship's zeal and honour's specious guise,
Until he won the passes of the land ;
Then burst were honour's oath, and friendship's ties !
He clutch'd his vulture-grasp, and called fair Spain his
prize.

XXXVIII.

An Iron Crown his anxious forehead bore ;
And well such diadem his heart became.
Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
Or check'd his course for piety or shame ;



THE ALHAMBRA

Where in the proud Alhambra's ruin'd breast
Barbaric monuments of pomp repose.

The Vision of Don Roderick, p. 223

From the drawing by W. N. Wilkinson

Who, trained a soldier, deem'd a soldier's fame
Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
Though neither truth nor honour deck'd his name ;
Who, placed by fortune on a Monarch's throne,
Reck'd not of Monarch's faith, or Mercy's kingly tone.

XXXIX.

From a rude isle his ruder lineage came,
The spark, that, from a suburb-hovel's hearth
Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
Hath not a meaner or more sordid birth.
And for the soul that bade him waste the earth—
The sable land-flood from some swamp obscure,
That poisons the glad husband-field with dearth,
And by destruction bids its fame endure,
Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and impure.

XL.

Before that Leader strode a shadowy Form ;
Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor show'd,
With which she beckon'd him through fight and
storm,
And all he crush'd that cross'd his desperate road,
Nor thought, nor fear'd, nor look'd on what he trode.
Realms could not glut his pride, blood could not
slake,
So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad—
It was AMBITION bade her terrors wake,
Nor deign'd she, as of yore, a milder form to take.

XLI.

No longer now she spurn'd at mean revenge,
Or staid her hand for conquer'd foeman's moan ;
As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
By Cæsar's side she crossed the Rubicon.

Nor joy'd she to bestow the spoils she won,
As when the banded powers of Greece were task'd
To war beneath the Youth of Macedon :
No seemly veil her modern minion ask'd,
He saw her hideous face, and loved the fiend unmask'd.

XLII.

That Prelate mark'd his march—On banners blazed
With battles won in many a distant land,
On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed ;
“ And hopest thou, then,” he said, “ thy power shall
stand ?
O, thou hast builded on the shifting sand,
And thou hast temper'd it with slaughter's flood ;
And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand,
Gore-moisten'd trees shall perish in the bud,
And by a bloody death, shall die the Man of Blood ! ”

XLIII.

The ruthless Leader beckon'd from his train
A wan fraternal Shade, and bade him kneel,
And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
While trumpets rang, and heralds cried, “ Castile ! ”¹
Not that he loved him—No !—In no man's weal,
Scarce in his own, e'er joy'd that sullen heart ;
Yet round that throne he bade his warriors wheel,
That the poor Puppet might perform his part,
And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start.

XLIV.

But on the Natives of that Land misused,
Not long the silence of amazement hung,

¹ The heralds, at the coronation of a Spanish monarch, proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word *Castilla*, *Castilla*, *Castilla* ; which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Bonaparte.

Nor brook'd they long their friendly faith abused ;
For, with a common shriek, the general tongue
Exclaim'd, " To arms ! "—and fast to arms they sprung.
And VALOUR woke, that Genius of the Land !
Pleasure, and ease, and sloth, aside he flung,
As burst th' awakening Nazarite his band,
When, 'gainst his treacherous foes he clench'd his dreadful
hand.²

XLV.

That Mimic Monarch now cast anxious eye
Upon the Satraps that begirt him round,
Now doff'd his royal robe in act to fly,
And from his brow the diadem unbound.
So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle wound,
From Tarik's walls to Bilboa's mountains blown,
These martial satellites hard labour found,
To guard a while his substituted throne—
Light recking of his cause, but battling for their own.

XLVI.

From Alpuhara's peak that bugle rung,
And it was echo'd from Corunna's wall ;
Stately Seville responsive war-shot flung,
Grenada caught it in her Moorish hall ;
Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
And, foremost still where Valour's sons are met,
First started to his gun each fiery Miquelet.

XLVII.

But unappall'd, and burning for the fight,
The Invaders march, of victory secure ;

² See Book of Judges, Chap. xv. v. 9-16.

Skilful their force to sever or unite.

And train'd alike to vanquish or endure.

Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to ensure,

Discord to breathe, and jealousy to sow,

To quell by boasting, and by bribes to lure ;

While nought against them bring the unpractised
foe,

Save hearts for Freedom's cause, and hands for Free-
dom's blow.

XLVIII.

Proudly they march—but, O ! they march not forth

By one hot field to crown a brief campaign,

As when their Eagles, sweeping through the North,

Destroy'd at every stoop an ancient reign !

Far other fate had Heaven decreed for Spain ;

In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,

New Patriot armies started from the slain,

High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide,¹

And oft the God of Battles blest the righteous side.

XLIX.

Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,

Remain'd their savage waste. With blade and brand,

By day the Invaders ravaged hill and dale,

But, with the darkness, the Guerilla band

Came like night's tempest, and avenged the land,

And claim'd for blood the retribution due,

Probed the hard heart, and lopp'd the murd'rous hand ;

And Dawn, when o'er the scene her beams she
threw,

Midst ruins they had made, the spoilers' corpses knew.

¹ See Note 3.

L.

What minstrel verse may sing, or tongue may tell,
Amid the vision'd strife from sea to sea,
How oft the Patriot banners rose or fell,
Still honour'd in defeat as victory !
For that sad pageant of events to be,
Show'd every form of fight by field and flood ;
Slaughter and Ruin, shouting forth their glee,
Beheld, while riding on the tempest scud,
The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrench'd with
blood !

LI.

Then Zaragoza—blighted be the tongue
That names thy name without the honour due !
For never hath the harp of Minstrel rung,
Of faith so felly proved, so firmly true !
Mine, sap, and bomb, thy shatter'd ruins knew,
Each art of war's extremity had room,
Twice from thy half-sack'd streets the foe withdrew,
And when at length stern fate decreed thy doom,
They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.¹

LII.

Yet raise thy head, sad city ! Though in chains,
Enthrall'd thou canst not be ! Arise, and claim
Reverence from every heart where Freedom reigns,
For what thou worshippest !—thy sainted Dame,

¹ The interesting account of Mr. Vaughan has made most readers acquainted with the first siege of Zaragoza. The last and fatal siege of that gallant and devoted city is detailed with great eloquence and precision in the "Edinburgh Annual Register" for 1809,—a work in which the affairs of Spain have been treated of with attention corresponding to their deep interest, and to the peculiar sources of information open to the historian.

She of the Column, honour'd be her name,
By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love !
And like the sacred relics of the flame,
That gave some martyr to the bless'd above,
To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove

LIII.

Not thine alone such wreck. Gerona fair
Faithful to death thy heroes shall be sung,
Manning the towers while o'er their heads the air
Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung ;
Now thicker dark'ning where the mine was sprung,
Now briefly lighten'd by the cannon's flare,
Now arch'd with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
And redd'ning now with conflagration's glare,
While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare.

LIV.

While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
While the earth shook, and darken'd was the sky,
And wide Destruction stunn'd the listening ear,
Appall'd the heart, and stupified the eye,—
Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry,
In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
Whene'er her soul is up, and pulse beats high,
Whether it hail the wine cup or the fight,
And bid each arm be strong, or bid each heart be light.

LV.

Don Roderick turn'd him as the shout grew loud-
A varied scene the changeful vision show'd,
For, where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
A gallant navy stemm'd the billows broad,

From mast and stern St. George's symbol flow'd,
Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear ;
Mottling the sea their landward barges row'd,
And flash'd the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
And the wild beach return'd the seaman's jovial cheer.

LVI.

It was a dread, yet spirit-stirring sight !
The billows foam'd beneath a thousand oars,
Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,
Legions on legions bright'ning all the shores.
Then banners rise, and cannon-signal roars,
Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,
Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-flourish pours,
And patriot hopes awake, and doubts are dumb,
For, bold in Freedom's cause, the bands of Ocean come !

LVII.

A various host they came—whose ranks display
Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight,
The deep battalion locks its firm array,
And meditates his aim the marksman light ;
Far glance the light of sabres flashing bright,
Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing mead,
Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,
Nor the fleet ordnance whirl'd by rapid steed,
That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed.

LVIII.

A various host—from kindred realms they came,
Brethren in arms, but rivals in renown—
For you fair bands shall merry England claim,
And with their deeds of valour deck her crown.

Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,
And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,
And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
And freeborn thoughts, which league the Soldier with the
Laws.

LIX.

And, O ! loved warriors of the Minstrel's land !
Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave !
The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
And harsher features, and a mien more grave ;
But ne'er in battle-field throbb'd heart so brave,
As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid ;
And when the pilroch bids the battle rave
And level for the charge your arms are laid,
Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset staid !

LX.

Hark ! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings,
Mingling wild mirth with war's stern minstrelsy,
His jest while each blithe comrade round him flings,
And moves to death with military glee :
Boast, Erin, boast them ! tameless, frank, and free,
In kindness warm, and fierce in danger known,
Rough Nature's children, humorous as she :
And HE, yon Chieftain—strike the proudest tone
Of thy bold harp, green Isle !—the Hero is thine own.

LXI.

Now on the scene Vimeira should be shown,
On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,

And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze :—¹
But shall fond fable mix with heroes' praise ?
Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs room ?
And dare her wild-flowers mingle with the bays,
That claim a long eternity to bloom
Around the warrior's crest, and o'er the warrior's tomb !

LXII.

Or may I give adventurous fancy scope,
And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
That hides futurity from anxious hope,
Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
And painting Europe rousing at the tale
Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurl'd,
While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
And Fame, with clarion-blast and wings unfurl'd,
To Freedom and Revenge awakes an injured World !

LXIII.

O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
Since fate has mark'd futurity her own :
Yet fate resigns to worth the glorious past,
The deeds recorded, and the laurels won.
Then, though the Vault of Destiny² be gone,

¹ For details of the battle of Vimeira, fought 21st Aug., 1808—of Corunna, 16th Jan., 1809—of Talavera, 28th July, 1809—and of Busaco, 27th Sept., 1810—See Sir Walter Scott's "Life of Napoleon," (first edition,) volumes vi. and vii., under these dates.

² Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed, that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled "*La Virgen del Sagrario*." The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Recundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man, and defies the king to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The king accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the Genie to inform Recl-

King, Prelate, all the phantasms of my brain,
Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
One note of pride and fire, a Patriot's parting strain !

sundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the Christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Rocisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play, we are informed that Don Roderick had removed the barrier, and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprized by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

CONCLUSION.

I.

“ Who shall command Estrella’s mountain-tide
Back to the source, when tempest-chafed, to hie ?
Who, when Gascogne’s vex’d gulf is raging wide,
Shall hush it as a nurse her infant’s cry ?
His magic power let such vain boaster try,
And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
And Biscay’s whirlwinds list his lullaby,
Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles’ way,
And they shall heed his voice, and at his bidding stay.

II.

“ Else ne’er to stoop, till high on Lisbon’s towers
They close their wings, the symbol of our yoke,
And their own sea hath whelm’d yon red-cross l’owers ! ”
Thus, on the summit of Alverca’s rock,
To Marshal, Duke, and Peer, Gaul’s Leader spoke.
While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled like Eden in her summer dress ;—
Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.¹

¹ I have ventured to apply to the movements of the French army that sublime passage in the prophecies of Joel, which seems applicable to them in more respects than that I have adopted in the text. One would think their

III.

And shall the boastful Chief maintain his word,
Though Heaven hath heard the wailings of the
land,
Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
Though Britons arm, and WELLINGTON command !
No ! grim Busaco's iron ridge shall stand
An adamantine barrier to his force ;
And from its base shall wheel his shatter'd band,
As from the unshaken rock the torrent hoarse
Bears off its broken waves, and seeks a devious course.

IV.

Yet not because Alcoba's mountain-hawk
Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
In numbers confident, yon Chief shall baulk
His Lord's imperial thirst for spoil and blood :
For full in view the promised conquest stood,
And Lisbon's matrons from their walls, might sum
The myriads that had half the world subdued,
And hear the distant thunders of the drum,
That bids the bands of France to storm and havoc come.

V.

Four moons have heard these thunders idly roll'd,
Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,
As famish'd wolves survey a guarded fold—
But in the middle path a lion lay !

ravages, their military appointments, the terror which they spread among invaded nations, their military discipline, their arts of political intrigue and deceit, were distinctly pointed out in the verses—*Joel* ii. 2-10.

In verse 20th also, which announces the retreat of the northern army, described in such dreadful colours, into a "land barren and desolate," and the dishonour with which God afflicted them for having "magnified themselves to do great things," there are particulars not inapplicable to the retreat of Massena ; Divine Providence having, in all ages, attached disgrace as the natural punishment of cruelty and presumption.

At length they move—but not to battle-fray,
Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight;
Beacons of infamy, they light the way
Where cowardice and cruelty unite
To damp with double shame their ignominious flight!

VI.

O triumph for the Fiends of Lust and Wrath!
Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
What wanton horrors mark'd their wreckful path!
The peasant butcher'd in his ruin'd cot,
The hoary priest even at the altar shot,
Childhood and age given o'er to sword and flame,
Women to infamy;—no crime forgot,
By which inventive demons might proclaim
Immortal hate to man, and scorn of God's great name!

VII.

The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,¹
Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer grasp'd his gun.
Nor with less zeal shall Britain's peaceful son
Exult the debt of sympathy to pay;
Riches nor poverty the tax shall shun,
Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worthless
lay.

VIII.

But thou—unfoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
Minion of Fortune, now miscall'd in vain!

¹ See Note 4.

Can vantage ground no confidence create,
 Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's mountain-chain ?
 Vainglorious fugitive ! ¹ yet turn again !
 Behold, where, named by some prophetic Seer,
 Flows Honour's Fountain,² as foredoom'd the stain
 From thy dishonour'd name and arms to clear—
 Fallen Child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour here !

IX.

Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid ;
 Those chief that never heard the lion roar !
 Within whose souls lives not a trace pourtray'd,
 Of Talavera, or Mondego's shore !
 Marshal each band thou hast, and summon more ;
 Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole ;
 Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
 Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,
 And weary out his arm—thou canst not quell his soul.

X.

O vainly gleams with steel Agueda's shore,
 Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
 And front the flying thunders as they roar,
 With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain !

¹ The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfaronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps on themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March, 1811, their rear-guard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry, (who were indeed many miles in the rear,) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed "God save the King." Their minstrelsy was, however, deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was sudden, and the rout complete ; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

² The literal translation of *Fuentes d'Honoro*.

And what avails thee that, for CAMERON slain,¹
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given—
Vengeance and grief gave mountain-rage the rein,
And, at the bloody spear-point headlong driven,
Thy Despot's giant guards fled like the rack of heaven.

XI.

Go, baffled boaster ! teach thy haughty mood
To plead at thine imperious master's throne,
Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
Deceived his hopes, and frustrated thine own ;
Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown,
By British skill and valour were outvied ;

¹ In the severe action of Fuentes d' Honoro, upon 5th May, 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in nowise checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsay, (let me be permitted to name a gallant countryman,) who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and, putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, sabre-in-hand. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into dragoons, contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy, already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons; and the appearance of some small reinforcements, notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout. A colonel or major of their cavalry, and many prisoners, (almost all intoxicated,) remained in our possession. Those who consider for a moment the difference of the services, and how much an artilleryman is necessarily and naturally led to identify his own safety and utility with abiding by the tremendous implement of war, to the exercise of which he is chiefly, if not exclusively trained, will know how to estimate the presence of mind which commanded so bold a manœuvre, and the steadiness and confidence with which it was executed. The gallant Colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d'Honoro. He fell at the head of his native Highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at Colonel Cameron, was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious Highlanders, who, under the command of Colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet. Massena pays my countrymen a singular compliment in his account of the attack and defence of this village, in which he says, the British lost many officers, and Scotch.

Last say, thy conqueror was WELLINGTON.

And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried—
God and our cause to friend, the venture we'll abide.

XII.

But you ye heroes of that well-fought day,
How shall a bard, unknowing and unknown,
His meed to each victorious leader pay,
Or bind on every brow the laurels won ?¹
Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave ;
And he, perchance, the minstrel-note might own,
Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
Mid yon far western isles that hear the Atlantic rave.

XIII.

Yes ! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword,
To give each Chief and every field its fame :
Hark ! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
And Red Barosa shouts for dauntless GRÈME !
O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
To bid the world re-echo to their fame !
For never, upon gory battle-ground,
With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver victors
crown'd !

XIV.

O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage steel'd,²

¹ See Note 5,

² See Note 6,



TOLEDO

The banners of more ruthless foes
Than the fierce Moor, float o'er Toledo's fane.

*The Vision of Don Roderick, p. 223.
From the drawing by David Roberts, R. A.*

And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield,
And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,
And taught her sons forgotten arms to wield—
Shiver'd my harp, and burst its every chord,
If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD !

XV.

Not on that bloody field of battle won,
Though Gaul's proud legions roll'd like mist away,
Was half his self-devoted valour shown,—
He gaged but life on that illustrious day ;
But when he toil'd those squadrons to array,
Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
He braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame.

XVI.

Nor be his praise o'erpast who strove to hide
Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
Whose wish Heaven for his country's weal denied ;
Danger and fate he sought, but glory found.
From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets sound,
The wanderer went ; yet, Caledonia ! still
Thine was his thought in march and tented ground ;
He dream'd 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill.

XVII.

O hero of a race renown'd of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell,
Since first distinguished in the onset bold,
Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell !

By Wallace' side it rung the Southron's knell,
 Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber, own'd its fame,
 Tummell's rude pass can of its terrors tell,
 But ne'er from prouder field arose the name,
 Than when wild Ronda learned the conquering shout of
 GRAEME !¹

XVIII.

But all too long, through seas unknown and dark,
 (With Spenser's parable I close my tale,)
 By shoal and rock hath steer'd my venturous bark,
 And landward now I drive before the gale.
 And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
 And nearer now I see the port expand,
 And now I gladly furl my weary sail,
 And, as the prow light touches on the strand,
 I strike my red-cross flag and bind my skiff to land.

¹ This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Graeme, or Grahame. They are said, by tradition, to have descended from the Scottish chief, under whose command his countrymen stormed the wall built by the Emperor Severus between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, the fragments of which are still popularly called Graeme's Dyke. Sir John the Graeme, "the hardy, wight, and wise," is well known as the friend of Sir William Wallace. Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibbermuir, were scenes of the victories of the heroic Marquis of Montrose. The pass of Killyerankie is famous for the action between King William's forces and the Highlanders in 1689,

"Where glad Dundee in faint huzzas expired."

It is seldom that one line can number so many heroes, and yet more rare when it can appeal to the glory of a living descendant in support of its ancient renown.

The allusions to the private history and character of General Grahame may be illustrated by referring to the eloquent and affecting speech of Mr. Sheridan, upon the vote of thanks to the Victor of Barosa.

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

"For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay."—P. 225.

ALMOST all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, ascribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors, Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's principal lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, Count Julian forgot the duties of a Christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors. Voltaire, in his General History, expresses his doubts of this popular story, and Gibbon gives him some countenance; but the universal tradition is quite sufficient for the purposes of poetry. The Spaniards, in detestation of Florinda's memory, are said, by Cervantes, never to bestow that name upon any human female, reserving it for their dogs. Nor is the tradition less inveterate among the Moors, since the same author mentions a promontory on the coast of Barbary, called "The Cape of the Caba Rumia, which, in our tongue, is the Cape of the Wicked Christian Woman; and it is a tradition among the Moors, that Caba, the daughter of Count Julian, who was the cause of the loss of Spain, lies buried there, and they think it ominous to be forced into that bay; for they never go in otherwise than by necessity."

NOTE 2.

*And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room,
Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
His nation's future fate a Spanish King shall see.*—P. 227.

The transition of an incident from history to tradition, and from tradition to fable and romance, becoming more marvellous at each step from its original simplicity, is not ill exemplified in the account of the "Fated Chamber" of Don Roderick, as given by his namesake, the historian of Toledo, contrasted with subsequent and more romantic accounts of the same subterranean discovery. I give the Archbishop of Toledo's tale in the words of Nonius, who seems to intimate, (though very modestly,) that the *fatale palatium*, of which so much had been said, was only the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre.

"Extra muros, septentrionem versus, vestigia magni olim theatri sparsa visuntur. Auctor est Rodericus, Toletanus, Archiepiscopus ante Arabum in Hispanias irruptionem, hic *fatale palatium* fuisse; quod invicti vectes æterna ferri robora clauderant, ne reseratum Hispaniæ excidium adferret; quod in fatis non vulgus solum, sed et prudentissimi quique credebant. Sed Roderici ultimi Gothorum Regis animum infelix curiositas subiit, sciendi quid sub tot vetitis claustris observaretur; ingentes ibi superiorum regum opes et arcanos thesauros servari ratus. Seras et pessulos perfringi curat, invitis omnibus; nihil præter arculam repertum, et in ea linteam, quo explicato novæ et insolentes hominum facies habitusque apparere, cum inscriptione Latina, *Hispaniæ excidium ab illa gente imminere*; Vultus habitusque Maurorum erant. Quamobrem ex Africa tantam cladem instare regi cæterisque persuasum; nec falso ut Hispaniæ annales etiamnum queruntur.—*Hispania Ludovic. Nonij. cap. lix.*

But, about the term of the expulsion of the Moors from Grenada, we find, in the "*Historia Verdadeyra del Rey Don Rodrigo*," a (pretended) translation from the Arabic of the sage Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique, a legend which puts to shame the modesty of the historian Roderick, with his chest and prophetic picture. The custom of ascribing a pretended Moorish original to these legendary histories, is ridiculed by Cervantes, who affects to translate the History of the Knight of the Woful Figure, from the Arabic of the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli.

NOTE 3.

High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide.—P. 240.

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders,—those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted warfare in the Peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroical Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months. While these gentlemen plead for deference to Bonaparte, and crave

“Respect for his great place—and bid the devil
Be duly honoured for his burning throne,”

it may not be altogether unreasonable to claim some modification of censure upon those who have been long and to a great extent successfully resisting this great enemy of mankind. That the energy of Spain has not uniformly been directed by conduct equal to its vigour, has been too obvious; that her armies, under their complicated disadvantages, have shared the fate of such as were defeated after taking the field with every possible advantage of arms and discipline, is surely not to be wondered at. But that a nation, under the circumstances of repeated discomfiture, internal treason, and the mismanagement incident to a temporary and hastily adopted government, should have wasted, by its stubborn, uniform, and prolonged resistance, myriads after myriads of those soldiers who had overrun the world—that some of its provinces should, like Galicia, after being abandoned by their allies, and overrun by their enemies, have recovered their freedom by their own unassisted exertions; that others, like Catalonia, undismayed by the treason which betrayed some fortresses, and the force which subdued others, should not only have continued their resistance, but have attained over their victorious enemy a superiority, which is even now enabling them to besiege and retake the places of

strength which had been wrested from them, is a tale hitherto untold in the revolutionary war. To say that such a people cannot be subdued, would be presumption similar to that of those who protested that Spain could not defend herself for a year, or Portugal for a month; but that a resistance which has been continued for so long a space, when the usurper, except during the short-lived Austrian campaign, had no other enemies on the continent, should be now less successful, when repeated defeats have broken the reputation of the French armies, and when they are likely (it would seem almost in desperation) to seek occupation elsewhere, is a prophecy as improbable as ungracious. And while we are in the humour of severely censuring our allies, gallant and devoted as they have shown themselves in the cause of national liberty, because they may not instantly adopt those measures which we in our wisdom may deem essential to success, it might be well if we endeavoured first to resolve the previous questions,—1st, Whether we do not at this moment know much less of the Spanish armies than those of Portugal, which were so promptly condemned as totally inadequate to assist in the preservation of their country? 2nd, Whether, independently of any right we have to offer more than advice and assistance to our independent allies, we can expect that they should renounce entirely the national pride, which is inseparable from patriotism, and at once condescend not only to be saved by our assistance, but to be saved in our own way? 3rd, Whether, if it be an object, (as undoubtedly it is a main one,) that the Spanish troops should be trained under British discipline, to the flexibility of movement, and power of rapid concert and combination, which is essential to modern war; such a consummation is likely to be produced by abusing them in newspapers and periodical publications? Lastly, Since the undoubted authority of British officers makes us now acquainted with part of the horrors that attend invasion, and which the providence of God, the valour of our navy, and perhaps the very efforts of these Spaniards, have hitherto diverted from us, it may be modestly questioned whether we ought to be too forward to estimate and condemn the feeling of temporary stupefaction which they create; lest, in so doing, we should resemble the worthy clergyman, who, while he had himself never snuffed a candle with his fingers, was disposed severely to criticise the conduct of a martyr, who winced a little among his flames.

NOTE 4.

*The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn.*"—P. 249.

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810-11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, &c. of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery: rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Massena, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity, and in many instances, when reduced themselves to short allowance, from having out-marched their supplies, they shared their pittance with the starving inhabitants, who had ventured back to view the ruins of their habitations, burnt by the retreating enemy, and to bury the bodies of their relations whom they had butchered. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence, that those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it?—It is not the least of Lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

NOTE 5.

But you, ye heroes of that well-fought day, &c.—P. 252.

The reader who desires to understand Sir Walter Scott's deliberate opinion on the subject of Sir John Moore's military character and conduct, is referred to the *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, (first edit.) vol. vi. chap. ix. p. 280-1. But perhaps

it may be neither unamusing nor uninteresting to consider some reflections from the pen of Sir Walter Scott himself on the injustice done to a name greater than Moore's in the noble stanzas on the battle of Waterloo, in the third canto of *Childe Harold*—an injustice which did not call forth any rebuke from the Edinburgh critics. Sir Walter in reviewing this canto said,

"Childe Harold arrives on Waterloo—a scene where all men, where a poet especially, and a poet such as Lord Byron, must needs pause, and amid the quiet simplicity of whose scenery is excited a moral interest, deeper and more potent even than that which is produced by gazing upon the sublimest efforts of Nature in her most romantic recesses.

"That Lord Byron's sentiments do not correspond with ours, is obvious, and we are sorry for both our sakes. For our own,—because we have lost that note of triumph with which his harp would otherwise have rung over a field of glory such as Britain never reaped before; and on Lord Byron's account,—because it is melancholy to see a man of genius duped by the mere cant of words and phrases, even when facts are most broadly confronted with them. If the poet has mixed with the original, wild, and magnificent creations of his imagination, prejudices which he could only have caught by the contagion which he most professes to despise, it is he himself that must be the loser. If his lofty muse has soared in all her brilliancy over the field of Waterloo without dropping even one leaf of laurel on the head of Wellington, his merit can dispense even with the praise of Lord Byron. And as when the images of Brutus were excluded from the triumphal procession, his memory became only the more powerfully imprinted on the souls of the Romans—the name of the British hero will be but more eagerly recalled to remembrance by the very lines in which his praise is forgotten."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi. 1816.

NOTE 6.

Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage steel'd.—P. 252.

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems, to a distinct observer, more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of Field-Marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline. In exposing his military reputation to the censure of imprudence



THE DEATH OF ARNOLD VON WINKELRIED

He rush'd against the Austrian band, in desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand, bore down each hostile spear.

The Battle of Sempach, p. 304

From the sculpture by Schiöth

from the most moderate, and all manner of unutterable calumnies from the ignorant and malignant, he placed at stake the dearest pledge which a military man had to offer, and nothing but the deepest conviction of the high and essential importance attached to success can be supposed an adequate motive. How great the chance of miscarriage was supposed, may be estimated from the general opinion of officers of unquestioned talents and experience, possessed of every opportunity of information; how completely the experiment has succeeded, and how much the spirit and patriotism of our ancient allies had been underrated, is evident, not only from those victories in which they have borne a distinguished share, but from the liberal and highly honourable manner in which these opinions have been retracted. The success of this plan, with all its important consequences, we owe to the indefatigable exertions of Field-Marshal Beresford.

BALLADS,
TRANSLATED. OR IMITATED,
FROM THE GERMAN, &c.

WILLIAM AND HELEN.

[1796.*]

IMITATED FROM THE "LENORÉ" OF BÜRGER.

THE Author had resolved to omit the following version of a well-known Poem, in any collection which he might make of his poetical trifles. But the publishers having pleaded for its admission, the Author has consented, though not unaware of the disadvantage at which this youthful essay (for it was written in 1795) must appear with those which have been executed by much more able hands, in particular that of Mr. Taylor of Norwich, and that of Mr. Spencer.

The following Translation was written long before the Author saw any other, and originated in the following circumstances:—A lady of high rank in the literary world read this romantic tale, as translated by Mr. Taylor, in the house of the celebrated Professor Dugald Stewart, of Edinburgh. The Author was not present, nor indeed in Edinburgh at the time; but a gentleman who had the pleasure of hearing the ballad, afterwards told him the story, and repeated the remarkable chorus—

"Tramp! tramp! across the land they speede,
Splash! splash! across the sea;
Hurrah! The dead can ride apace!
Dost fear to ride with me?"

In attempting a translation then intended only to circulate

* THE CHASE, and WILLIAM AND HELEN; Two Ballads, from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürger. Edinburgh: Printed by Mundell and Son, Royal Bank Close, for Manners and Miller, Parliament Square; and sold by T. Cadell, junr., and W. Davies, in the Strand, London. 1796. 4to.

among friends, the present Author did not hesitate to make use of this impressive stanza ; for which freedom he has since obtained the forgiveness of the ingenious gentleman to whom it properly belongs.

WILLIAM AND HELEN.

I.

From heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And eyed the dawning red :
“ Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !
O art thou false or dead ? ”—

II.

With gallant Fred'rick's princely power
He sought the bold Crusade ;
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

III.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And ev'ry knight return'd to dry
The tears his love had shed.

IV.

Our gallant host was homeward bound
With many a song of joy ;
Green waved the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory.

V.

And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

VI.

Full many a maid her true-love met,
And sobb'd in his embrace,
And flutt'ring joy in tears and smiles
Array'd full many a face.

VII.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad ;
She sought the host in vain ;
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithless, or if slain.

VIII.

The martial band is past and gone ;
She rends her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.

IX.

"O rise, my child," her mother said,
"Nor sorrow thus in vain ;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again."—

X.

"O mother, what is gone, is gone,
What's lost for ever lorn :
Death, death alone can comfort me ;
O had I ne'er been born !

XI.

"O break, my heart, O break at once !
Drink my life-blood, Despair !
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share."—

XII.

"O enter not in judgment, Lord !"
The pious mother prays ;
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child !
She knows not what she says.

XIII.

"O say thy pater noster, child !
O turn to God for grace !
His will, that turned thy bliss to bale,
Can change thy bale to bliss."—

XIV.

"O mother, mother, what is bliss,
O mother, what is bale ?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell.

XV.

"Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,
Since my loved William's slain ?
I only pray'd for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain."

XVI.

"O take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow ;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O hallow'd be thy woe !"—

XVII.

“ No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain ;
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

XVIII.

“ O break, my heart, O break at once !
Be thou my god, Despair !
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer.”—

XIX.

“ O enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay !
She knows not what her tongue has spoke ;
Impute it not, I pray !

XX.

“ Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,
And turn to God and grace ;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss.”—

XXI.

“ O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
O mother, what is bale ?
Without my William what were heaven,
Or with him what were hell ? ”—

XXII.

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till, spent, she sought her silent room,
All in the lonely tower.

XXIII.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,
Till sun and day were o'er,
And through the glimmering lattice shone
The twinkling of the star.

XXIV.

Then, crash ! the heavy drawbridge fell
That o'er the moat was hung ;
And, clatter ! clatter ! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

XXV.

The clank of echoing steel was heard
As off the rider bounded ;
And slowly on the winding stair
A heavy footstep sounded.

XXVI.

And hark ! and hark ! a knock—Tap ! tap !
A rustling stifled noise ;—
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring ;—
At length a whispering voice.

XXVII.

“Awake, awake, arise, my love !
How, Helen, dost thou fare ?
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st ? laugh'st thou, or weep'st ?
Hast thought on me, my fair ? ”—

XXVIII.

“My love ! my love !—so late by night !—
I waked, I wept for thee :
Much have I borne since dawn of morn ;
Where, William, could'st thou be ? ”—

XXIX.

“ We saddle late—from Hungary
I rode since darkness fell ;
And to its bourne we both return
Before the matin bell.”—

XXX.

“ O rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold !
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the wind :—
My love is deadly cold.”

XXXI.

“ Let the wind howl through hawthorn bush !
This night we must away ;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright ;
I cannot stay till day.

XXXII.

“ Busk, busk, and boune ! Thou mount'st behind
Upon my black barb steed :
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal bed.”—

XXXIII.

To-night—to-night a hundred miles !—
O dearest William, stay !
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal hour !
O wait, my love, till day ! ”—

XXXIV.

“ Look here, look here—the moon shines clear—
Full fast I ween we ride ;
Mount and away ! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed,

XXXV.

"The black barb snorts, the bridle rings ;
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee !
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee."—

XXXVI.

Strong love prevail'd : She busks, she bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined.

XXXVII.

And, hurry ! hurry ! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be ;
Spurn'd from the courser's thundering heels
The flashing pebbles flee.

XXXVIII.

And on the right, and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
And cot, and castle, flew.

XXXIX.

" Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines clear
Fleet goes my barb—keep hold !
Fear'st thou ?"—" O no ! " she faintly said ;
" But why so stern and cold ?

XL.

" What yonder rings ? what yonder sings ?
Why shrieks the owlet grey ?"—
" 'Tis death-bells' clang, 'tis funeral song,
The body to the clay,

XLI.

“ With song and clang, at morrow’s dawn,
Ye may inter the dead :
To-night I ride, with my young bride,
To deck our bridal bed.

XLII.

“ Come with thy choir, thou coffin’d guest,
To swell our nuptial song !
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast !
Come all, come all along ! ”—

XLIII.

Ceased clang and song ; down sunk the bier ;
The shrouded corpse arose :
And, hurry ! hurry ! all the train
The thundering steed pursues.

XLIV.

And, forward ! forward ! on they go ;
High snorts the straining steed ;
Thick pants the rider’s labouring breath,
As headlong on they speed.

XLV.

“ O William, why this savage haste ?
And where thy bridal bed ? ”
“ ’Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,
And narrow, trustless maid.”—

XLVI.

“ No room for me ? ”—“ Enough for both ;—
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course ! ”—
O’er thundering bridge, through boiling surge,
He drove the furious horse.

XLVII.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee.

XLVIII.

Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower !
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower !

XLIX.

"Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear,
Dost fear to ride with me ?—
Hurrah ! hurrah ! the dead can ride !"—
"O William, let them be !—

L.

"See there, see there ! What yonder crows
And creaks 'mid whistling rain ?"—
"Gibbet and steel, th' accursed wheel ;
A murderer in his chain.—

LI.

"Hollo ! thou felon, follow here :
To bridal bed we ride ;
And thou shalt prance a fether dance
Before me and my bride."—

LII.

And, hurry ! hurry ! clash, clash, clash !
The wasted form descends ;
And fleet as wind through hazel bush
The wild career attends.

LIII.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
 Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
 The flashing pebbles flee.

LIV.

How fled what moonshine faintly show'd !
 How fled what darkness hid !
How fled the earth beneath their feet
 The heaven above their head !

LV.

"Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear,
 And well the dead can ride ;
Does faithful Helen fear for them ?"—
 " O leave in peace the dead !"—

LVI.

"Barb ! Barb ! methinks I hear the cock ;
 The sand will soon be run :
Barb ! Barb ! I smell the morning air ;
 The race is wellnigh done."—

LVII.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
 Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
 The flashing pebbles flee.

LVIII.

"Hurrah ! hurrah ! well ride the dead ;
 The bride, the bride is come ;
And soon we reach the bridal bed,
 For, Helen, here's my home."—

LIX.

Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolved an iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam
Were seen a church and tower.

LX.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round
The birds of midnight, scared ;
And rustling like autumnal leaves
Unhallow'd ghosts were heard.

LXI.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale
He spurr'd the fiery horse,
Till sudden at an open grave
He check'd the wondrous course.

LXII.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel.

LXIII.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mould'ring flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton.

LXIV.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,
And with a fearful bound,
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

LXV.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres flit along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the funeral song ;

LXVI.

“ E’en when the heart’s with anguish cleft,
Revere the doom of Heaven.
Her soul is from her body reft
Her spirit be forgiven ”

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

THIS is a translation, or rather an imitation of the *Wilde Jäger* of the German poet Bürger. The tradition upon which it is founded bears, that formerly a Wildgrave, or keeper of a royal forest, named Faulkenburg, was so much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and otherwise so extremely profligate and cruel, that he not only followed this unhallowed amusement on the Sabbath, and other days consecrated to religious duty, but accompanied it with the most unheard-of oppression upon the poor peasants, who were under his vassalage. When this second Nimrod died, the people adopted a superstition, founded probably on the many various uncouth sounds heard in the depth of a German forest, during the silence of the night. They conceived they still heard the cry of the Wildgrave's hounds; and the well-known cheer of the deceased hunter, the sounds of his horses' feet, and the rustling of the branches before the game, the pack, and the sportsmen, are also distinctly discriminated; but the phantoms are rarely, if ever, visible. Once, as a benighted *Chasseur* heard this infernal chase pass by him, at the sound of the halloo, with which the Spectre Huntsman cheered his hounds, he could not refrain from crying, "*Glück zu, Falkenburgh!*" (Good sport to ye, Falkenburgh!) "Dost thou wish me good sport?" answered a hoarse voice; "thou shalt share the game;" and there was thrown at him what seemed to be a huge piece of foul carrion. The daring *Chasseur* lost two of his best horses soon after, and never perfectly recovered the personal effects of this ghostly greeting. This tale, though told with some variations, is universally believed all over Germany.

The French had a similar tradition concerning an aerial hunter, who infested the forest of Fountainebleau. He was sometimes visible; when he appeared as a huntsman, sur-

rounded with dogs, a tall grisly figure. Some account of him may be found in "Sully's Memoirs," who says he was called *Le Grand Veneur*. At one time he chose to hunt so near the palace, that the attendants, and, if I mistake not, Sully himself, came out into the court, supposing it was the sound of the king returning from the chase. This phantom is elsewhere called Saint Hubert.

The superstition seems to have been very general, as appears from the following fine poetical description of this phantom chase, as it was heard in the wilds of Ross-shire.

"Ere since, of old, the haughty thanes of Ross,—
 So to the simple swain tradition tells,—
 Were wont with clans, and ready vassals throng'd,
 To wake the bounding stag, or guilty wolf,
 There oft is heard, at midnight, or at noon,
 Beginning faint, but rising still more loud,
 And nearer, voice of hunters, and of hounds,
 And horns, hoarse winded, blowing far and keen :—
 Forthwith the hubbub multiplies; the gale
 Labours with wilder shrieks, and rife din
 Of hot pursuit; the broken cry of deer
 Mangled by throttling dogs; the shouts of men,
 And hoofs, thick beating on the hollow hill.
 Sudden the grazing heifer in the vale
 Starts at the noise, and both the herdsman's ears
 Tingle with inward dread. Aghast, he eyes
 The mountains height, and all the ridges round,
 Yet not one trace of living wight discerns,
 Nor knows, o'erawed, and trembling as he stands,
 To what, or whom, he owes his idle fear,
 To ghost, to witch, to fairy, or to fiend;
 But wonders, and no end of wondering finds."

Albania—reprinted in *Scottish Descriptive Poems*,
 pp. 167, 168.

A posthumous miracle of Father Lesley, a Scottish capuchin, related to his being buried on a hill haunted by these unearthly cries of hounds and huntsmen. After his sainted relics had been deposited there, the noise was never heard more. The reader will find this, and other miracles, recorded in the life of Father Bonaventura, which is written in the choicest Italian.

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

[1796.¹]

THE Wildgrave winds his bugle-horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.

The beams of God's own hallow'd day
Had painted yonder spire with gold,
And, calling sinful man to pray,
Loud, long, and deep the bell had toll'd:

But still the Wildgrave onward rides;
Halleo, halloo! and, hark again!
When, spurring from opposing sides,
Two Stranger Horsemen joined the train.

¹ Published (1796) with William and Helen, and entitled "The Chase."

Who was each Stranger, left and right,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell ;
The right-hand steed was silver white,
The left, the swarthy hue of hell.

The right-hand Horseman, young and fair,
His smile was like the morn of May ;
The left, from eye of tawny glare,
Shot midnight lightning's lurid ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on high,
Cried, " Welcome, welcome, noble lord !
What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
To match the princely chase, afford ? "

" Cease thy loud bugle's clanging knell,"
Cried the fair youth, with silver voice ;
" And for devotion's choral swell,
Exchange the rude unhallow'd noise.

" To-day, the ill-omen'd chase forbear,
Yon bell yet summons to the fane ;
To-day the Warning Spirit hear,
To-morrow thou mayst mourn in vain."—

" Away, and sweep the glades along ! "
The Sable Hunter hoarse replies ;
" To muttering monks leave matin-song,
And bells, and books, and mysteries.

The Wildgrave spurr'd his ardent steed,
And, launching forward with a bound,
" Who, for thy drowsy priestlike rede,
Would leave the jovial horn and hound ?

"Hence, if our manly sport offend !
With pious fools go chant and pray :—
Well hast thou spoke, my dark-brow'd friend ;
Halloo, halloo ! and, hark away !"

The Wildgrave spurr'd his courser light,
O'er moss and moor, o'erholt and hill ;
And on the left, and on the right,
Each Stranger Horseman follow'd still.

Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
A stag more white than mountain snow ;
And louder rung the Wildgrave's horn,
"Hark forward, forward ! holla, ho !"

The heedless wretch has cross'd the way ;
He gasps, the thundering hoofs below ;—
But, live who can, or die who may,
Still, "Forward, forward !" on they go.

See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with autumn's blessings crown'd ;
See, prostrate at the Wildgrave's feet,
A husbandman with toil embrown'd :

"O mercy, mercy, noble lord !
Spare the poor's pittance," was his cry,
"Earn'd by the sweat these brows have pour'd,
In scorching hour of fierce July."

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey ;
The impetuous Earl no warning heeds,
But furious holds the onward way.

“ Away, thou hound ! so basely born,
Or dread the scourge’s echoing blow ! ”
Then loudly rung his bugle horn,
“ Hark forward, forward, holla, ho ! ”

So said, so done :—A single bound
Clears the poor labourer’s humble pale ;
Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
Like dark December’s stormy gale.

And man and horse, and hound and horn,
Destructive sweep the field along ;
While, joying o’er the wasted corn,
Fell Famine marks the maddening throng.

Again uproused, the timorous prey
Scours moss and moor, and holt and hill ;
Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
And trusts for life his simple skill.

Too dangerous solitude appear’d ;
He seeks the shelter of the crowd ;
Amid the flock’s domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to shroud.

O’er moss and moor, and holt and hill,
His track the steady blood-hounds trace ;
O’er moss and moor, unwearied still,
The furious Earl pursues the chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman fall ;—
“ O spare, thou noble Baron, spare
These herds, a widow’s little all ;
These flocks, an orphan’s fleecy care ! ”

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey ;
The Earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward way.

“ Unmanner'd dog ! To stop my sport
Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
Though human spirits, of thy sort,
Were tenants of these carrion kine ! ”

Again he winds his bugle horn,
“ Hark forward, forward, holla, ho ! ”
And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
He cheers his furious hounds to go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall ;
Down sinks their mangled herdsman near ;
The murderous cries the stag appal,—
Again he starts, new-nerved by fear.

With blood besmear'd, and white with foam,
While big the tears of anguish pour,
He seeks, amid the forest's gloom,
The humble hermit's hallow'd bower.

But man and horse, and horn and hound,
Fast rattling on his traces go ;
The sacred chapel rung around
With, “ Hark away ! and, holla, ho ! ”

All mild, amid the rout profane,
The holy hermit pour'd his prayer ;
“ Forbear with blood God's house to stain ;
Revere his altar, and forbear ! ”

“The meanest brute has rights to plead,
Which, wrong'd by cruelty, or pride,
Draw vengeance on the ruthless head :—
Be warn'd at length, and turn aside.”—

Still the Fair Horseman anxious pleads ;
The Black, wild whooping, points the prey :
Alas ! the Earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward way.

“Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn ;
Not sainted martyrs' sacred song,
Not God himself, shall make me turn !”

He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
“Hark forward, forward, holla, ho !”—
But off, on whirlwind's pinions borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse and man, and horn and hound,
And clamour of the chase, was gone ;
For hoofs, and howls, and bugle sound,
A deadly silence reign'd alone.

Wild gazed the affrighted Earl around ;
He strove in vain to wake his horn,
In vain to call : for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds ;
No distant baying reach'd his ears :
His courser, rooted to the ground,
The quickening spur unmindful bears.

Still dark and darker frown the shades,
Dark as the darkness of the grave ;
And not a sound the still invades,
Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o'er the sinner's humbled head
At length the solemn silence broke ;
And, from a cloud of swarthy red,
The awful voice of thunder spoke.

" Oppressor of creation fair !
Apostate Spirits' harden'd tool !
Scorner of God ! Scourge of the poor !
The measure of thy cup is full.

" Be chased for ever through the wood ;
For ever roam the affrighted wild ;
And let thy fate instruct the proud,
God's meanest creature is his child."

'Twas hush'd : One flash, of sombre glare,
With yellow tinged the forests brown ;
Up rose the Wildgrave's bristling hair,
And horror chill'd each nerve and bone.

Cold pour'd the sweat in freezing rill ;
A rising wind began to sing ;
And louder, louder, louder still,
Brought storm and tempest on its wing.

Earth heard the call ;—Her entrails rend ;
From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
Mix'd with sulphureous flames, ascend
The misbegotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly Huntsman next arose,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell ;
His eye like midnight lightning glows,
His steed the swarthy hue of hell.

The Wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn,
With many a shriek of helpless woe ;
Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
And, "Hark away, and holla, ho !"

With wild despair's reverted eye,
Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
With bloody fangs, and eager cry ;
In frantic fear he scours along.—

Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
Till time itself shall have an end :
By day, they scour earth's cavern'd space,
At midnight's witching hour, ascend.

This is the horn, and hound, and horse,
That oft the lated peasant hears ;
Appall'd, he signs the frequent cross,
When the wild din invades his ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human woe,
When, at his midnight mass, he hears
The infernal cry of, "Holla, ho !"

THE FIRE-KING.

"The blessings of the evil Genii, which are curses, were upon him."
Eastern Tale.

[1801.]

This ballad was written at the request of Mr. LEWIS, to be inserted in his "Tales of Wonder."† It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical; for it is recorded, that, during the struggles of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a Knight-Templar, called Saint-Alban, deserted to the Saracens, and defeated the Christians in many combats, till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with King Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

BOLD knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear;
And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
At the tale of Count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
And see you that palmer, from Palestine's land,
The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?—

† Published in 1801.

" Now palmer, grey palmer, O tell unto me,
What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie ?
And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand ?
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land ? "—

" O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have ;
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the Heathen have lost, and the Christians have won."

A fair chain of gold 'mid her ringlets there hung ;
O'er the palmer's grey locks the fair chain has she flung :
" Oh palmer, grey palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countrie.

" And, palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
O saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave ?
When the Crescent went back, and the Red-cross rush'd on,
O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon ? "—

" O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows ;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows ;
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high ;
But, lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

" The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-scorched walls ;
The pure stream runs muddy ; the gay hope is gone ;
Count Albert is prisoner on Mount Lebanon."

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed ;
And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need ;
And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
To ransom Count Albert from Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had Count Albert on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood, had he ;
A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon

" O Christian, brave Christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee :
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take ;
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake.

" And, next, in the cavern, where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Curdmans adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake ;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake.

" And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land ;
For my lord and my love then Count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplish'd for Zulema's sake."

He has thrown by his helmet, and cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord ;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watch'd until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone.

Amazed was the Princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmur'd the priests as on Albert they gazed ;
They search'd all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep deep under ground,
He watch'd the lone night, while the winds whistled
round ;

Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh,
The flame burn'd unmoved, and nought else did he spy.

Loud murmur'd the priests, and amaz'd was the King,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing ;
They search'd Albert's body, and, lo ! on his breast
Was the sign of the Cross, by his father impress'd.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant return'd to the cavern again ;
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell :
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell !

High bristled his hair, his heart flutter'd and beat,
And he turn'd him five steps, half resolved to retreat ;
But his heart it was harden'd, his purpose was gone,
When he thought of the Maiden of fair Lebanon.

Scarcely pass'd he the archway, the threshold scarce trode,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were
abroad,

They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King.

Full sore rock'd the cavern whene'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high ;
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the Monarch of Flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguish'd in form,
His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm ;
I ween the stout heart of Count Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the Monarch of Flame.



“THE PATRIOT’S SELF-DEVOTED DEED”

Four lances splinter’d on his crest, six shiver’d in his side;
Still on the serried files he press’d—he broke their ranks, and died.

The Battle of Sempach, p. 304

In his hand a broad falchion blue-glimmered through
 smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke :
“ With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no
 more,
Till thou bend to the Cross, and the Virgin adore.”

The cloud-shrouded Arm gives the weapon ; and see !
The recreant receives the charm'd gift on his knee :
The thunders growl distant, and faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on the whirlwind, the phantom retires.

Count Albert has arm'd him the Paynim among,
Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong ;
And the Red-cross wax'd faint, and the Crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forests to Galilee's wave,
The sands of Samaar drank the blood of the brave ;
Till the Knights of the Temple, and Knights of Saint John,
With Salem's King Baldwin, against him came on.

'The war-cymbals clatter'd, the trumpets replied,
'The lances were couch'd, and they closed on each side ;
And horsemen and horses Count Albert o'erthrew,
Till he pierced the thick tumult King Baldwin unto.

Against the charm'd blade which Count Albert did wield,
The fence had been vain of the King's Red-cross shield ;
But a Page thrust him forward the monarch before,
And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore.

So fell was the dint, that Count Albert stoop'd low
Before the cross'd shield, to his steel saddlebow ;
And scarce had he bent to the Red-cross his head,—
“ *Bonne grace, Notre Dame !* ” he unwittingly said.

Sore sigh'd the charm'd sword, for its virtue was o'er,
It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more ;
But true men have said, that the lightning's red wing
Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King.

He clench'd his set teeth, and his gauntleted hand ;
He stretch'd, with one buffet, that Page on the strand ;
As back from the stripling the broken casque roll'd,
You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold.

Short time had Count Albert in horror to stare
On those death-swimming eyeballs, and blood-clotted
hair ;

For down came the Templars, like Cedron in flood,
And dyed their long lances in Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Curdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
To the scallop, the saltier, and crossleted shield ;
And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
From Bethsaida's fountains to Naphthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain.—
Oh, who is yon Paynin lies stretch'd 'mid the slain ?
And who is yon Page lying cold at his knee ?—
Oh, who but Count Albert and fair Rosalie !

The Lady was buried in Salem's bless'd bound,
The Count he was left to the vulture and hound :
Her soul to high mercy Our Lady did bring ;
His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
How the Red-cross it conquer'd, the Crescent it fell :
And lords and gay ladies have sigh'd, 'mid their glee,
At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

FREDERICK AND ALICE.

[1801.]

This tale is imitated, rather than translated, from a fragment introduced in Goethe's "Claudina Von Villa Bella," where it is sung by a member of a gang of banditti, to engage the attention of the family, while his companions break into the castle. It owes any little merit it may possess to my friend MR. LEWIS, to whom it was sent in an extremely rude state; and who, after some material improvements, published it in his "Tales of Wonder."

FREDERICK leaves the land of France,
Homeward hastes his steps to measure,
Careless casts the parting glance
On the scene of former pleasure.

Joying in his prancing steed,
Keen to prove his untried blade,
Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
Over mountain, moor, and glade.

Helpless, ruin'd, left forlorn,
Lovely Alice wept alone;
Mourn'd o'er love's fond contract torn,
Hope, and peace, and honour flown.

Mark her breast's convulsive throbs !
See, the tear of anguish flows !—
Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
Loud the laugh of frenzy rose.

Wild she cursed, and wild she pray'd ;
Seven long days and nights are o'er ;
Death in pity brought his aid,
As the village bell struck four.

Far from her, and far from France,
Faithless Frederick onward rides ;
Marking, blithe, the morning's glance
Mantling o'er the mountain's sides.

Heard ye not the boding sound,
As the tongue of yonder tower,
Slowly, to the hills around,
'Told the fourth, the fated hour ?

Starts the steed, and snuffs the air,
Yet no cause of dread appears ;
Bristles high the rider's hair,
Struck with strange mysterious fears.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
In the steed the spur he hides ;
From himself in vain he flies ;
Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days, and seven long nights,
Wild he wander'd, woe the while !
Ceaseless care, and causeless fright,
Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night descends ;
Rivers swell, and rain-streams pour ;
While the deafening thunder lends
All the terrors of its roar.

Weary, wet, and spent with toil,
Where his head shall Frederick hide ?
Where, but in yon ruin'd aisle,
By the lightning's flash descried.

To the portal, dank and low,
Fast his steed the wanderer bound :
Down a ruin'd staircase slow,
Next his darkling way he wound.

Long drear vaults before him lie !
Glimmering lights are seen to glide !—
“Blessed Mary, hear my cry !
Deign a sinner's steps to guide !”

Often lost their quivering beam,
Still the lights move slow before,
Till they rest their ghastly gleam
Right against an iron door.

Thundering voices from within,
Mix'd with peals of laughter, rose ;
As they fell, a solemn strain
Lent its wild and wondrous close !

Midst the din, he seem'd to hear
Voice of friends, by death removed ;—
Well he knew that solemn air,
'Twas the lay that Alice loved.—

Hark ! for now a solemn knell
Four times on the still night broke ;
Four times, at its deaden'd swell,
Echoes from the ruins spoke.

As the lengthen'd clangours die
Slowly opes the iron door !
Straight a banquet met his eye,
But a funeral's form it wore !

Coffins for the seats extend ;
All with black the board was spread ;
Girt by parent, brother, friend,
Long since number'd with the dead !

Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
Ghastly smiling, points a seat ;
All arose, with thundering sound ;
All the expected stranger greet.

High their meagre arms they wave,
Wild their notes of welcome swell ;—
“ Welcome, traitor, to the grave !
Perjured, bid the light farewell ! ”

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.

[1818.]

THESE verses are a literal translation of an ancient Swiss ballad upon the Battle of Sempach, fought 9th July, 1386, being the victory by which the Swiss cantons established their independence; the author, Albert Tschudi, denominated the Souter, from his profession of a shoemaker. He was a citizen of Lucerne, esteemed highly among his countrymen, both for his powers as a *Meister-Singer*, or minstrel, and his courage as a soldier; so that he might share the praise conferred by Collins on Æschylus, that—

“ — Not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot steel.”

The circumstance of their being written by a poet returning from the well-fought field he describes, and in which his country's fortune was secured, may counter on Tschudi's verses an interest which they are not entitled to claim from their poetical merit. But ballad poetry, the more literally it is translated, the more it loses its simplicity, without acquiring either grace or strength; and therefore some of the faults of the verses must be imputed to the translator's feeling it a duty to keep as closely as possible to his original. The various puns, rude attempts at pleasantry, and disproportioned episodes, must be set down to Tschudi's account, or to the taste of his age.

The military antiquary will derive some amusement from the minute particulars which the martial poet has recorded. The mode in which the Austrian men-at-arms received the charge of the Swiss, was by forming a phalanx, which they defended

with their long lances. The gallant Winkelreid, who sacrificed his own life by rushing among the spears, clasping in his arms as many as he could grasp, and thus opening a gap in those iron battalions, is celebrated in Swiss history. When fairly mingled together, the unwieldy length of their weapons, and cumbrous weight of their defensive armour, rendered the Austrian men-at-arms a very unequal match for the light-armed mountaineers. The victories obtained by the Swiss over the German chivalry, hitherto deemed as formidable on foot as on horseback, led to important changes in the art of war. The poet describes the Austrian knights and squires as cutting the peaks from their boots ere they could act upon foot, in allusion to an inconvenient piece of foppery, often mentioned in the middle ages. Leopold III., Archduke of Austria, called "The handsome man-at-arms," was slain in the Battle of Sempach, with the flower of his chivalry.



STATUE OF ARNOLD VON WINKELRIED AT STANS, UNTERWALDEN

This patriot's self-devoted deed first tamed the Lion's mood,
And the four forest cantons freed from thralldom by his blood.

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.¹

'Twas when among our linden-trees
The bees had housed in swarms,
(And grey-hair'd peasants say that these
Betoken foreign arms,)

Then look'd we down to Willisow,
The land was all in flame ;
We knew the Archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their vow,
So hot their heart and bold,
" On Switzer carles we'll trample now,
And slay both young and old."

With clarion loud, and banner proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair array,
Their onward march they make.

¹ This translation first appeared in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine for February, 1818.—ED.

“ Now list, ye lowland nobles all—
Ye seek the mountain strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your lot
In such a dangerous land.

“ I rede ye, shrive ye of your sins,
Before ye farther go ;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to woe.”—

“ But where now shall we find a priest
Our shrift that he may hear ? ”—
“ The Switzer priest ¹ has ta'en the field,
He deals a penance drear.

“ Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel ;
And with his trusty partisan
Your absolution deal.”—

'Twas on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steep'd in dew,
And merry maids had sickles ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne
Together have they join'd ;
The pith and core of manhood stern,
Was none cast looks behind.

was the Lord of Hare-castle,
And to the Duke he said,
“ Yon little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismay'd.”—

¹ All the Swiss clergy who were able to bear arms fought in this patriotic war.

“O Hare-castle,¹ thou heart of hare!”

Fierce Oxenstern replied.—

“Shalt see then how the game will fare

The taunted knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets bright,

And closing ranks amain ;

The peaks they hew'd from their boot-points

Might wellnigh load a wain.²

And thus they to each other said,

“Yon handful down to hew

Will be no boastful tale to tell,

The peasants are so few.”—

The gallant Swiss Confederates there

They pray'd to God aloud,

And he display'd his rainbow fair

Against a swarthy cloud.

Then heart and pulse throb'd more and more

With courage firm and high,

And down the good Confed'rates bore

On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian Lion³ 'gan to growl,

And toss his mane and tail ;

And ball, and shaft, and crossbow bolt,

Went whistling forth like hail.

¹ In the original, *Hausenstein*, or *Hare-stone*.

² This seems to allude to the preposterous fashion, during the middle ages, of wearing boots with the points or peaks turned upwards, and so long, that in some cases they were fastened to the knees of the wearer with small chains. When they alighted to fight upon foot, it would seem that the Austrian gentlemen found it necessary to cut off these peaks, that they might move with the necessary activity.

³ A pun on the Archduke's name, Leopold.

Lance, pike, and halbert, mingled there,
The game was nothing sweet ;
The boughs of many a stately tree
Lay shiver'd at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood fast,
So close their spears they laid ;
It chafed the gallant Winkelreid,
Who to his comrades said—

“ I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son ;
I leave them to my country's care,—
This field shall soon be won.

“ These nobles lay their spears right thick,
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order break,
And make my brethren way.”

He rush'd against the Austrian band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splinter'd on his crest,
Six shiver'd in his side ;
Still on the serried files he press'd—
He broke their ranks, and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed
First tamed the Lion's mood,
And the four forest cantons freed
From thralldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made a lane,
His valiant comrades burst,
With sword, and axe, and partisan,
And hack, and stab, and thrust.

The daunted Lion 'gan to whine,
And granted ground amain,
The Mountain Bull¹ he bent his brows,
And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and shield,
At Sempach in the flight,
The cloister vaults at Konig'sfield
Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the Archduke Leopold,
So lordly would he ride,
But he came against the Switzer churls,
And they slew him in his pride.

The hieifer said unto the bull,
"And shall I not complain?
There came a foreign nobleman
To milk me on the plain.

"One thrust of thine outrageous horn
Has gall'd the knight so sore,
That to the churchyard he is borne
To range our glens no more."

An Austrian noble left the stour,
And fast the flight 'gan take;
And he arrived in luckless hour
At Sempach on the lake.

¹ A pun on the *Urns*, or wild-bull, which gives name to the Canton of Uri.

He and his squire a fisher call'd,
 (His name was Hans Von Rot,)
"For love, or meed, or charity,
 Receive us in thy boat!"

Their anxious call the fisher heard,
 And, glad the meed to win,
His shallop to the shore he steer'd.
 And took the flyers in.

And while against the tide and wind
 Hans stoutly row'd his way,
The noble to his follower signed
 He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them turn'd
 The squire his dagger drew,
Hans saw his shadow in the lake,
 The boat he overthrew.

He 'whelm'd the boat, and as they strove,
 He stunn'd them with his oar,
"Now, drink ye deep, my gentle sirs,
 You'll ne'er stab boatman more.

"Two gilded fishes in the lake
 This morning have I caught,
Their silver scales may much avail,
 Their carrion flesh is naught."

It was a messenger of woe
 Has sought the Austrian land:
"Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
 My lord lies on the strand.

“ At Sempach, on the battle-field,
His bloody corpse lies there.”—
“ Ah, gracious God ! ” the lady cried,
“ What tidings of despair ! ”

Now would you know the minstrel wight,
Who sings of strife so stern,
Albert the Souter is he hight,
A burgher of Lucerne.

A merry man was he, I wot,
The night he made the lay,
Returning from the bloody spot,
Where God had judged the day.

THE NOBLE MORINGER,

AN ANCIENT BALLAD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

[1819.¹]

THE original of these verses occurs in a collection of German popular songs, entitled, *Sammlung Deutschen Volkslieder*, Berlin, 1807, published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen, both, and more especially the last, distinguished for their acquaintance with the ancient popular poetry and legendary history of Germany.

In the German Editor's notice of the ballad, it is stated to have been extracted from a manuscript Chronicle of Nicolaus Thomann, chaplain to Saint Leonard in Weisenhorn, which bears the date 1533; and the song is stated by the author to have been generally sung in the neighbourhood at that early period. Thomann, as quoted by the German Editor, seems faithfully to have believed the event he narrates. He quotes tombstones and obituaries to prove the existence of the personages of the ballad, and discovers that there actually died, on the 11th May, 1349, a Lady Von Neuffen, Countess of Marstetten, who was, by birth, of the house of Moringer. This lady he supposes to have been Moringer's daughter, mentioned

¹ The translation of the Noble Moringer appeared originally in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1816 (*published in 1819*). It was composed during Sir Walter Scott's severe and alarming illness of April, 1819, and dictated, in the intervals of exquisite pain, to his daughter Sophia, and his friend William Laidlaw.—ED.

in the ballad. He quotes the same authority for the death of Berckhold Von Neuffen, in the same year. The editors, on the whole, seem to embrace the opinion of Professor Smith of Ulm, who, from the language of the ballad, ascribes its date to the fifteenth century.

The legend itself turns on an incident not peculiar to Germany, and which, perhaps, was not unlikely to happen in more instances than one, when crusaders abode long in the Holy Land, and their disconsolate dames received no tidings of their fate. A story very similar in circumstances, but without the miraculous machinery of Saint Thomas, is told of one of the ancient Lords of Haigh-hall in Lancashire, the patrimonial inheritance of the late Countess of Balcarras; and the particulars are represented on stained glass upon a window in that ancient manor-house.¹

¹ See Introduction to "The Betrothed," Waverley Novels, Paterson's "Edinburgh Edition," vol. xix.

THE NOBLE MORINGER.

I.

O, WILL you hear a knightly tale of old Bohemian day,
It was the noble Moringer in wedlock bed he lay ;
He halsed and kiss'd his dearest dame, that was as sweet
as May,
And said, "Now, lady of my heart, attend the words I
say.

II.

" 'Tis I have vow'd a pilgrimage unto a distant shrine,
And I must seek Saint Thomas-land, and leave the land
that's mine ;
Here shalt thou dwell the while in state, so thou wilt
pledge thy fay,
That thou for my return wilt wait seven twelvemonths
and a day."

III.

Then out and spoke that Lady bright, sore troubled in
her cheer,
" Now tell me true, thou noble knight, what order takest
thou here ;
And who shall lead thy vassal band, and hold thy lordly
sway,
And be thy lady's guardian true when thou art far
away? "

IV.

Out spoke the noble Moringer, "Of that have thou no
care,
There's many a valiant gentleman of me holds living
fair;
The trustiest shall rule my land, my vassals and my
state,
And be a guardian tried and true to thee, my lovely mate.

V.

"As Christian-man, I needs must keep the vow which I
have plight,
When I am far in foreign land, remember thy true
knight;
And cease, my dearest dame, to grieve, for vain were sor-
row now,
But grant thy Moringer his leave, since God hath heard
his vow."

VI.

It was the noble Moringer from hed he made him boune,
And met him there his Chamberlain, with ewer and with
gown:
He flung the mantle on his back, 'twas furr'd with
miniver,
He dipped his hand in water cold, and bathed his forc-
head fair.

VII.

"Now hear," he said, "Sir Chamberlain, true vassal art
thou mine,
And such the trust that I repose in that proved worth of
thine,
For seven years shalt thou rule my towers, and lead my
vassal train,
And pledge thee for my Lady's faith till I return again."

VIII.

The Chamberlain was blunt and true, and sturdily said
he,
“ Abide, my lord, and rule your own, and take this rede
from me ;
That woman's faith's a brittle trust—Seven twelvemonths
didst thou say ?
I'll pledge me for no lady's truth beyond the seventh fair
day.”

IX.

The noble Baron turn'd him round, his heart was full of
care,
His gallant Esquire stood him nigh, he was Marstetten's
heir,
To whom he spoke right anxiously, “ Thou trusty squire
to me,
Wilt thou receive this weighty trust when I am o'er the
sea ?

X.

“ To watch and ward my castle strong, and to protect my
land,
And to the hunting or the host to lead my vassal band ;
And pledge thee for my Lady's faith, till seven long years
are gone,
And guard her as Our Lady dear was guarded by Saint
John.”

XI.

Marstetten's heir was kind and true, but fiery, hot, and
young,
And readily he answer made with too presumptuous
tongue ;
“ My noble lord, cast care away, and on your journey
wend,
And trust this charge to me until your pilgrimage have
end.

XII.

“ Rely upon my plighted faith, which shall be truly tried,
To guard your lands, and ward your towers, and with
your vassals ride ;
And for your lovely Lady's faith, so virtuous and so dear,
I'll gage my head it knows no change, be absent thirty
year.”

XIII.

The noble Moringer took cheer when thus he heard him
speak,
And doubt forsook his troubled brow, and sorrow left his
cheek ;
A long adieu he bids to all—hoists topsails, and away,
And wanders in Saint Thomas-land seven twelvemonths
and a day.

XIV.

It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the Baron's slumbering sense a boding vision
crept ;
And whisper'd in his ear a voice, “ 'Tis time, Sir Knight,
to wake,
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

XV.

“ Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another
rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train ;
And she, the Lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night within thy father's hall she weds Marstetten's
heir.”

XVI.

It is the noble Moringer starts up and tears his beard,
“ Oh would that I had no'er been born ! what tidings
have I heard !

To lose my lordship and my lands the less would be my
care,
But, God ! that e'er a squire untrue should wed my Lady
fair.

XVII.

" O good Saint Thomas, hear," he pray'd, " my patron
Saint art thou,
A traitor robs me of my land even while I pay my vow !
My wife he brings to infamy that was so pure of name,
And I am far in foreign land, and must endure the
shame."

XVIII.

It was the good Saint Thomas, then, who heard his pil-
grim's prayer,
And sent a sleep so deep and dead that it o'erpower'd his
care ;
He waked in fair Bohemian land outstretch'd beside a
rill,
High on the right a castle stood, low on the left a mill.

XIX.

The Moringer he started up as one from spell unbound,
And dizzy with surprize and joy gazed wildly all around ;
" I know my father's ancient towers, the mill, the stream
I know,
Now blessed be my patron Saint who cheer'd his pilgrim's
woe ! "

XX.

He leant upon his pilgrim staff, and to the mill he drew,
So alter'd was his goodly form that none their master
knew ;
The Baron to the miller said, " Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor palmer in your land what tidings may there
be ? "

XXI.

The miller answer'd him again, " He knew of little news,
Save that the Lady of the land did a new bridegroom
choose;
Her husband died in distant land, such is the constant
word,
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy Lord.

XXII.

"Of him I held the little mill which wins me living free,
God rest the Baron in his grave, he still was kind to me !
And when Saint Martin's tide comes round, and millers
take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shail have both cope
and stole."

XXIII.

It was the noble Moringer to climb the hill began,
And stood before the bolted gate a woe and weary man ;
"Now help me, every saint in heaven, that can compas-
sion take,
To gain the entrance of my hall this woeful match to
break."

XXIV.

His very knock it sounded sad, his call was sad and slow,
For heart and head, and voice and hand, were heavy all
with woe ;
And to the warder thus he spoke : " Friend, to thy Lady
say,
A pilgrim from Saint Thomas-land craves harbour for a
day.

XXV.

" I've wander'd many a weary step, my strength is well-
nigh done,
And if she turn me from her gate I'll see no morrow's
sun ;

I pray, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake, a pilgrim's bed and
dole,
And for the sake of Moringer's, her once-loved husband's
soul."

XXVI.

It was the stalwart warder then he came his dame
before,
"A pilgrim, worn and travel-toll'd, stands at the castle-
door ;
And prays, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake, for harbour and
for dole,
And for the sake of Moringer, thy noble husband's soul."

XXVII.

The Lady's gentle heart was moved, "Do up the gate,"
she said,
"And bid the wanderer welcome be to banquet and to
bed ;
And since he names my husband's name, so that he lists
to stay,
These towers shall be his harbourage a twelvemonth and
a day."

XXVIII.

It was the stalwart warder then undid the portal broad,
It was the noble Moringer that o'er the threshold
strode ;
"And have thou thanks, kind heaven," he said, "though
from a man of sin,
That the true lord stands here once more his castle-gate
within."

XXIX.

Then up the halls paced Moringer, his step was sad and
slow ;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none seem'd their Lord to
know ;



MARY SITS ON NEIDPATH'S TOWER

Ere, scarce a distant form was ken'd, she knew, and waved to greet him;
And o'er the battlement did bend, as on the wing to meet him.

*The Maid of Neidpath, p. 330**

From the drawing by Geo. Cattemole

He sat him on a lowly bench, oppress'd with woe and
wrong,
Short space he sat, but ne'er to him seem'd little space so
long.

XXX.

Now spent was day, and feasting o'er, and come was
evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides retire to nuptial
bower ;
“Our castle's wont,” a brides-man said, “hath been both
firm and long,
No guest to harbour in our halls till he shall chant a
song.”

XXXI.

Then spoke the youthful bridegroom there as he sat by
the bride,
“My merry minstrel folk,” quoth he, “lay shalm and
harp aside ;
Our pilgrim guest must sing a lay, the castle's rule to hold,
And well his guerdon will I pay with garment and with
gold.”—

XXXII.

“Chill flows the lay of frozen age,” 'twas thus the pilgrim
sung,
“Nor golden meed, nor garment gay, unlocks his heavy
tongue ;
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as
thine,
And by my side as fair a bride with all her charms was
mine.

XXXIII.

“But time traced furrows on my face, and I grew silver-
hair'd,
For locks of brown and cheeks of youth, she left this brow
and beard ;

Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest
stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen
age."

XXXIV.

It was the noble Lady there this woeful lay that hears,
And for the aged pilgrim's grief her eye was dimm'd with
tears ;
She bade her gallant cupbearer a golden beaker take,
And bear it to the palmer poor to quaff it for her sake.

XXXV.

It was the noble Moringer that dropp'd amid the wine
A bridal ring of burning gold so costly and so fine :
Now listen, gentles, to my song, it tells you but the
sooth,
'Twas with that very ring of gold he pledged his bridal
truth.

XXXVI.

Then to the cupbearer he said, " Do me one kindly
deed,
And should my better days return, full rich shall be thy
meed ;
Bear back the golden cup again to yonder bride so gay,
And crave her of her courtesy to pledge the palmer
grey."

XXXVII.

The cupbearer was courtly bred, nor was the boon
denied,
The golden cup he took again, and bore it to the bride ;
" Lady," he said, " your reverend guest sends this, and
bids me pray,
That, in thy noble courtesy, thou pledge the palmer
grey."

XXXVIII.

The ring hath caught the Lady's eye, she views it close
and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, "The Moringer
is here !"
Then might you see her start from seat, while tears in
torrents fell,
But whether 'twas for joy or woe, the ladies best can
tell.

XXXIX.

But loud she utter'd thanks to Heaven, and every saintly
power,
That had return'd the Moringer before the midnight hour ;
And loud she utter'd vow on vow, that never was there
bride,
That had like her preserved her troth, or been so sorely
tried.

XL.

"Yes, here I claim the praise," she said, "to constant
matrons due,
Who keep the troth that they have plight, so steadfastly
and true ;
For count the term howe'er you will, so that you count
aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll
twelve to-night."

XLI.

It was Marstetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneel'd before the Moringer, and down his weapon
threw ;
"My oath and knightly faith are broke," these were the
words he said,
"Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy
vassal's head."

XLII.

The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
"He gathers wisdom that hath roam'd seven twelve-
months and a day ;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her
sweet and fair,
I give her for the bride you lose, and name her for my
heir.

XLIII.

"The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old
bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually
were told ;
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle
gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late."

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS AND
SONGS.

THE BARD'S INCANTATION.

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION IN THE
AUTUMN OF 1804.¹

THE Forest of Glenmore is drear.

It is all of black pine and the dark oak-tree ;
And the midnight wind, to the mountain deer,

Is whistling the forest lullaby :

The moon looks through the drifting storm,

But the troubled lake reflects not her form,

For the waves roll whitening to the land,

And dash against the shelvy strand.

There is a voice among the trees,

That mingles with the groaning oak—

That mingles with the stormy breeze,

And the lake-waves dashing against the rock ;—

There is a voice within the wood,

The voice of the bard in fitful mood ;

His song was louder than the blast,

As the bard of Glenmore through the forest past.

¹ This poem was first published in the "English Minstrelsy," 2 vols. Edin. 1810.

“ Wake ye from your sleep of death,
Minstrels and bards of other days !
For the midnight wind is on the heath,
And the midnight meteors dimly blaze :
The Spectre with his Bloody Hand,¹
Is wandering through the wild woodland ;
The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
And the time is meet to awake the dead !

“ Souls of the mighty, wake and say,
To what high strain your harps were strung,
When Lochlin plow'd her billowy way,
And on your shores her Norsemen flung ?
Her Norsemen train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the Raven's food,
All, by your harpings doom'd to die
On bloody Largs and Loncarty.²

“ Mute are ye all ? No murmurs strange
Upon the midnight breeze sail by ;
Nor through the pines, with whistling change,
Mimic the harp's wild harmony !
Mute are ye now ?—Ye ne'er were mute,
When Murder with his bloody foot,
And Rapine with his iron hand,
Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

“ O yet awake the strain to tell,
By every deed in song enroll'd,
By every chief who fought or fell,
For Albion's weal in battle bold ;—

¹ The forest of Glenmore is haunted by a spirit called Lhamdearg, or Red-hand.

² Where the Norwegian invader of Scotland received two bloody defeats



THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE

Then woman's shriek was heard in vain, nor infancy's unpitied plain.
More than the warrior's groan, could gain respite from ruthless butchery.

From Coilgach,¹ first who roll'd his car
Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
To him, of veteran memory dear,
Who victor died on Aboukir.

“By all their swords, by all their scars,
By all their names, a mighty spell!
By all their wounds, by all their wars,
Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
More impious than the heathen Dane,
More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
Gaul's ravening legions hither come!”

The wind is hush'd, and still the lake—
Strange murmurs fill my tingling ears,
Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
At the dread voice of other years—
“When targets clash'd, and bugles rung,
And blades round warriors' heads were flung.
The foremost of the band were we,
And hymn'd the joys of Liberty!”

¹ The Galgacus of Tacitus.

THE PALMER.¹

“O, OPEN the door, some pity to show,
Keen blows the northern wind!
The glen is white with the drifted snow,
And the path is hard to find.

“No outlaw seeks your castle gate,
From chasing the King's deer,
Though even an outlaw's wretched state
Might claim compassion here.

“A weary Palmer, worn and weak,
I wander for my sin;
O, open, for Our Lady's sake!
A pilgrim's blessing win!

“I'll give you pardons from the Pope,
And reliques from o'er the sea,—
Or if for these you will not ope,
Yet open for charity.

¹ This, and the two following, were first published in Haydn's Collection of Scottish Airs, vol. ii. Edin. 1806.

“The hare is crouching in her form,
The hart beside the hind;
An aged man, amid the storm,
No shelter can I find.

“You hear the Ettrick’s sulien roar,
Dark, deep, and strong is he;
And I must ford the Ettrick o’er,
Unless you pity me.

“The iron gate is bolted hard,
At which I knock in vain;
The owner’s heart is closer barr’d,
Who hears me thus complain.

“Farewell, farewell! and Mary grant,
When old and frail you be,
You never may the shelter want,
That’s now denied to me.”

The Ranger on his couch lay warm,
And heard him plead in vain;
But oft amid December’s storm,
He’ll hear that voice again:

For lo, when through the vapours dank,
Morn shone on Ettrick fair,
A corpse amid the alders rank,
The Palmer welter’d there.

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH.

(1806).

THERE is a tradition in Tweeddale, that, when Neidpath Castle, near Peebles, was inhabited by the Earls of March, a mutual passion subsisted between a daughter of that noble family, and a son of the Laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick Forest. As the alliance was thought unsuitable by her parents, the young man went abroad. During his absence the lady fell into a consumption; and at length, as the only means of saving her life, her father consented that her lover should be recalled. On the day when he was expected to pass through Peebles, on the road to Tushielaw, the young lady, though much exhausted, caused herself to be carried to the balcony of a house in Peebles, belonging to the family, that she might see him as he rode past. Her anxiety and eagerness gave such force to her organs, that she is said to have distinguished his horse's footsteps at an incredible distance. But Tushielaw, unprepared for the change in her appearance, and not expecting to see her in that place, rode on without recognizing her, or even slackening his pace. The lady was unable to support the shock, and, after a short struggle, died in the arms of her attendants. There is an incident similar to this traditional tale in Count Hamilton's "*Fleur d'Epine*."

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH.

O LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing ;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower,
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decay'd by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining ;
By fits, a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying ;
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear,
Seem'd in her frame residing ;
Before the watch-dog prick'd his ear,
She heard her lover's riding ;

Ere scarce a distant form was ken'd,
She knew, and waved to greet him;
And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he pass'd—an heedless gaze,
As o'er some stranger glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan,
Which told her heart was broken.

WANDERING WILLIE.

(1806.)

ALL joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climb'd the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea ;
O weary betide it ! I wander'd beside it,
And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou follow'd thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain ;
Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were
wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my ee,
And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wish'd that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did
rattle,

And blithe was each heart for the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar ;
And trust me, I'll smile, though my een they may glisten ;
For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And oh, how we doubt when there's distance 'tween
lovers,

When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the
ee ;
How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfulest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times—could I help it ?—I pined and I ponder'd,
If love could change notes like the bird on the tree—
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may hae wander'd,
Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
Hardships and danger despising for fame,
Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame !

Enough now thy story in annals of glory
Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain ;
No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave
me,
I never will part with my Willie again.

HUNTING SONG.¹

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
“Waken, lords and ladies gay.”

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain grey,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming:
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
“Waken, lords and ladies gay.”

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;

¹ First published in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* of 1808,—and set to a Welsh air in Thomson's “*Select Melodies*,” vol. iii. 1817.

We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd ;
You shall see him brought to bay,
“ Waken, lords and ladies gay.”

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay !
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we ;
Time, stern huntsman ! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk ;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

THE VIOLET.¹

THE violet in her green-wood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dew-drop's weight reclining ;
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through wat'ry lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be past its morrow ;
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remain'd the tear of parting sorrow.

¹ This and the following piece appeared in the "English Minstrelsy," vol. ii. Edinburgh: 1810.

TO A LADY.

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL.

TAKE these flowers, which, purple waving,
On the ruin'd rampart grew,
Where, the sons of freedom braving,
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there :
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair.

THE RESOLVE.^{*}

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM.—1809.

My wayward fate I needs must plain,
 Though bootless be the theme ;
I loved, and was beloved again,
 Yet all was but a dream :
For, as her love was quickly got,
 So it was quickly gone ;
No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
 But coldly dwell alone.

Not maid more bright than maid was e'er
 My fancy shall beguile,
By flattering word, or feigned tear,
 By gesture, look, or smile :
No more I'll call the shaft fair shot,
 Till it has fairly flown,
Nor scorch me at a flame so hot ;—
 I'll rather freeze alone.

Each ambush'd Cupid I'll defy,
 In cheek, or chin, or brow,
And deem the glance of woman's eye
 As weak as woman's vow :

^{*} Published in the Edinburgh Annual Register of 1806.

I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
That is but lightly won ;
I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
And learn to live alone.

The flaunting torch soon blazes out,
The diamond's ray abides ;
The flame its glory hurls about,
The gem its lustre hides ;
Such gem I fondly deem'd was mine,
And glow'd a diamond stone,
But, since each eye may see it shine,
I'll darkling dwell alone.

No waking dream shall tinge my thought
With dyes so bright and vain,
No silken net, so slightly wrought,
Shall tangle me again :
No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
I'll live upon mine own,
Nor shall wild passion trouble it,—
I'll rather dwell alone.

And thus I'll hush my heart to rest,—
“Thy loving labour's lost ;
Thou shalt no more be wildly blest,
To be so strangely crost :
The widow'd turtles mateless die,
The phoenix is but one ;
They seek no loves—no more will I—
I'll rather dwell alone.”

EPITAPH,^{*}

DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT

IN LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL, AT THE BURIAL-PLACE

OF THE FAMILY OF MISS SEWARD.

AMID these aisles, where once his precepts show'd
The Heavenward pathway which in life he trode,
This simple tablet marks a Father's bier,
And those he loved in life, in death are near ;
For him, for them, a Daughter bade it rise,
Memorial of domestic charities.
Still wouldst thou know why o'er the marble spread,
In female grace the willow droops her head ;
Why on her branches, silent and unstrung,
The minstrel harp is emblematic hung ;
What poet's voice is smother'd here in dust
Till waked to join the chorus of the just,—
Lo ! one brief line an answer sad supplies,
Honour'd, beloved, and mourn'd, here SEWARD lies !
Her worth, her warmth of heart, let friendship say,—
Go seek her genius in her living lay.

^{*} Edinburgh Annual Register, 1809.

THE RETURN TO ULSTER.¹

ONCE again,—but how changed since my wand'rings
began—

I have heard the deep voice of the Lagan and Bann,
And the pines of Clanbrassil resound to the roar,
That wearies the echoes of fair Tullamore.

Alas! my poor bosom, and why shouldst thou burn!
With the scenes of my youth can its raptures return?
Can I live the dear life of delusion again,
That flow'd when these echoes first mixed with my
strain?

It was then that around me, though poor and unknown,
High spells of mysterious enchantment were thrown;
The streams were of silver, of diamond the dew,
The land was an Eden, for fancy was new.
I had heard of our bards, and my soul was on fire
At the rush of their verse, and the sweep of their lyre:
To me 'twas not legend, nor tale to the ear,
But a vision of noontide, distinguished and clear.

Ultonia's old heroes awoke at the call,
And renewed the wild pomp of the chase and the hall;

¹ First published in Mr. G. Thomson's Collection of Irish Airs. 1816.

And the standard of Fion flash'd fierce from on high ;
Like a burst of the sun when the tempest is nigh :¹
It seem'd that the harp of green Erin once more
Could renew all the glories she boasted of yore.—
Ye^t why at remembrance, fond heart, shouldst thou
burn ?

They were days of delusion, and cannot return.

But was she, too, a phantom, the Maid who stood by,
And list'd my lay, while she turn'd from mine eye ?
Was she, too, a vision, just glancing to view,
Then dispersed in the sunbeam, or melted to dew ?
Oh ! would it had been so,—O would that her eye
Had been but a star-glance that shot through the sky,
And her voice that was moulded to melody's thrill,
Had been but a zephyr, that sigh'd and was still !

Oh ! would it had been so,—not then this poor heart
Had learn'd the sad lesson, to love and to part ;
To bear, unassisted, its burthen of care,
While I toil'd for the wealth I had no one to share.
Not then had I said, when life's summer was done,
And the hours of her autumn were fast speeding on,
“Take the fame and the riches ye brought in your
train,
And restore me the dream of my spring-tide again.”

¹ In ancient Irish poetry, the standard of Fion, or Fingal, is called the *Sun-burst*, an epithet acceby rendered by the *Sun-beam* of Macpherson.

ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.¹

“ O TELL me, Harper, wherefore flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and woe
Far down the desert of Glencoe,
 Where none may list their melody?
Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
Or to the dun deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle that from high
 Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy ? ” —

“ No, not to these, for they have rest, —
The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,
The stag his lair, the crane her nest,
 Abode of lone security.
But those for whom I pour the lay,
Not wild-wood deep, nor mountain gray,
Not this deep dell, that shrouds from day,
 Could screen from treach'rous cruelty.

“ Their flag was furl'd, and mute their drum,
The very household dogs were dumb,
Unwont to bay at guests that come
 In guise of hospitality.

¹ First published in Thomson's "Select Melodies," 1814.

His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,
The dame her distaff flung aside,
To tend her kindly housewifery.

“The hand that mingled in the meal,
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel
Meed for his hospitality!
The friendly hearth which warm'd that hand,
At midnight arm'd it with the brand,
That bade destruction's flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.

“Then woman's shriek was heard in vain,
Nor infancy's unpitied plain,
More than the warrior's groan, could gain
Respite from ruthless butchery!
The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that cloked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than Southron clemency.

“Long have my harp's best notes been gone,
Few are its strings, and faint their tone,
They can but sound in desert lone
Their grey-hair'd master's misery
Were each grey hair a minstrel string,
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
‘Revenge for blood and treachery!’”

PROLOGUE TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY
OF THE
FAMILY LEGEND.¹

'Tis sweet to hear expiring Summer's sigh,
Through forests tinged with russet, wail and die;
'Tis sweet and sad the latest notes to hear
Of distant music, dying on the ear;
But far more sadly sweet, on foreign strand,
We list the legends of our native land,
Link'd as they come with every tender tie,
Memorials dear of youth and infancy.

Chief, thy wild tales, romantic Caledon,
Wake keen remembrance in each hardy son.
Whether on India's burning coasts he toil,
Or till Arcadia's ² winter-fetter'd soil
He hears with throbbing heart and moisten'd eyes,
And, as he hears, what dear illusions rise!
It opens on his soul his native dell,
The wood's wild waving, and the water's swell;

¹ Miss Baillie's "Family Legend" was produced with considerable success on the Edinburgh stage in the winter of 1809-10. This prologue was spoken on that occasion by the Author's friend, Mr. Daniel Terry.

² Arcadia or Nova Scotia.

Tradition's theme, the tower that threatens the plain,
The mossy cairn that hides the hero slain ;
The cot beneath whose simple porch were told,
Py grey-hair'd patriarch, the tales of old,
The infant group that hush'd their sports the while,
And the dear maid who listen'd with a smile.
The wanderer, while the vision warms his brain,
Is denizen of Scotland once again.

Are such keen feelings to the crowd confined,
And sleep they in the Poet's gifted mind ?
Oh no ! For She, within whose mighty page
Each tyrant Passion shows his woe and rage,
Has felt the wizard influence they inspire,
And to your own traditions tuned her lyre.
Yourselves shall judge—whoe'er has raised the sail
By Mull's dark coast, has heard this evening's tale.
The plaided boatman, resting on his oar,
Points to the fatal rock amid the roar
Of whitening waves, and tells whate'er to-night
Our humble stage shall offer to your sight ;
Proudly preferr'd that first our efforts give
Scenes glowing from her pen to breathe and live ;
More proudly yet, should Caledon approve
The filial token of a Daughter's love.

FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE,
HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL.

FROM THE GAELIC.

(1815.)

The original verses are arranged to a beautiful Gaelic air, of which the chorus is adapted to the double pull upon the oars of a galley, and which is therefore distinct from the ordinary jorrams, or bout-songs. They were composed by the Family Bard upon the departure of the Earl of Seaforth, who was obliged to take refuge in Spain, after an unsuccessful effort at insurrection in favour of the Stuart family, in the year 1718.

FAREWELL to Mackenneth, great Earl of the North,
The Lord of Lochcarron, Glenshiel, and Seaforth ;
To the Chieftain this morning his course who began,
Launching forth on the billows his bark like a swan.
For a far foreign land he has hoisted his sail,
Farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

O swift be the galley, and hardy her crew,
May her captain be skilful, her mariners true,

In danger undaunted, unwearied by toil,
Though the whirlwind should rise, and the ocean should
boil :

On the brave vessel's gunnel I drank his bonail,¹
And farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

Awake in thy chamber, thou sweet southland gale !
Like the sighs of his people, breathe soft on his sail ;
Be prolong'd as regret, that his vassals must know,
Be fair as their faith, and sincere as their woe :
Be so soft, and so fair, and so faithful, sweet gale,
Wafting onward Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

Be his pilot experienced, and trusty, and wise,
To measure the seas and to study the skies :
May he hoist all his canvas from streamer to deck
But O ! crowd it higher when wafting him back—
Till the cliffs of Skooroora, and Conan's glad vale,
Shall welcome Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

¹ Bonail, or Bonallez, the old Scottish phrase for a feast at parting with a friend.

IMITATION

OF THE PRECEDING SONG.¹

So sung the old Bard, in the grief of his heart,
When he saw his loved Lord from his people depart.
Now mute on thy mountains, O Albyn, are heard
Nor the voice of the song, nor the harp of the bard ;
Or its strings are but waked by the stern winter gale,
As they mourn for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

From the far Southland Border a Minstrel came forth,
And he waited the hour that some Bard of the north
His hand on the harp of the ancient should cast,
And bid its wild numbers mix high with the blast ;
But no bard was there left in the land of the Gael,
To lament for Mackenzie, last chief of Kintail.

And shalt thou then sleep, did the Minstrel exclaim,
Like the son of the lowly, unnoticed by fame ?
No, son of Fitzgerald ! in accents of woe,
The song thou hast loved o'er thy coffin shall flow,

¹ These verses were written shortly after the death of Lord Seaforth, the last male representative of his illustrious house. He was a nobleman of extraordinary talents, who must have made for himself a lasting reputation, had not his political exertions been checked by the painful natural infirmities alluded to in the fourth stanza.

And teach thy wild incertainties to join in the wail,
That laments for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

In vain, the bright course of thy talents to wrong,
Fate deaden'd thine ear and imprison'd thy tongue ;
For brighter o'er all her obstructions arose
The glow of the genius they could not oppose ;
And who in the land of the Saxon or Gael,
Might match with Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail?

Thy sons rose around thee in light and in love,
All a father could hope, all a friend could approve ;
What 'vails it the tale of thy sorrows to tell,—
In the spring-time of youth and of promise they fell !
Of the line of Fitzgerald remains not a male,
To bear the proud name of the Chief of Kintail.

And thou, gentie Dame, who must bear to thy grief,
For thy clan and thy country the cares of a Chief,
Whom brief rolling moons in six changes have left,
Of thy husband, and father, and brethren bereft,
To thine ear of affection, how sad is the hail,
That salutes thee the Heir of the line of Kintail !¹

¹ The Honourable Lady Hood, daughter of the last Lord Seaforth, widow of Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, now Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie of Seaforth and Glasserton, 1838.

WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN, HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN.

FROM THE GAELIC.

This song appears to be imperfect, or, at least, like many of the early Gaelic poems, makes a rapid transition from one subject to another; from the situation, namely, of one of the daughters of the clan, who opens the song by lamenting the absence of her lover, to an eulogium over the military glories of the Chieftain. The translator has endeavoured to imitate the abrupt style of the original.

A WEARY month has wander'd o'er
Since last we parted on the shore ;
Heaven ! that I saw thee, Love, once more,
Safe on that shore again !—
'Twas valiant Lachlan gave the word :
Lachlan, of many a galley lord :
He call'd his kindred bands on board,
And launch'd them on the main.

Clan-Gillian ¹ is to ocean gone ;
Clan-Gillian, fierce in foray known ;

¹ *i.e.* The clan of Maclean, literally the race of Gillian.

Rejoicing in the glory won
In many a bloody broil :
For wide is heard the thundering fray,
The rout, the ruin, the dismay,
When from the twilight glens away
Clan-Gillian drives the spoil.

Woe to the hills that shall rebound
Our banner'd bag-pipes' maddening sound ;
Clan-Gillian's onset echoing round,
Shall shake their inmost cell.
Woe to the bark whose crew shall gaze,
Where Lachlan's silken streamer plays !
The fools might face the lightning's blaze
As wisely and as well !

THE NORMAN HORSESHOE.

AIR—*The War-Song of the Men of Glamorgan.*

The Welsh, inhabiting a mountainous country, and possessing only an inferior breed of horses, were usually unable to encounter the shock of the Anglo-Norman cavalry. Occasionally, however, they were successful in repelling the invaders; and the following verses are supposed to celebrate a defeat of CLARE, Earl of Striguil and Pembroke, and of NEVILLE, Baron of Chepstow, Lords-Marchers of Monmouthshire. Rymny is a stream which divides the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan: Caerphili, the scene of the supposed battle, is a vale upon its banks, dignified by the ruins of a very ancient castle.

I.

RED glows the forge in Striguil's bounds,
And hammers din, and anvil sounds,
And armourers, with iron toil,
Barb many a steed for battle's broil.
Foul fall the hand which bends the steel
Around the courser's thundering heel,
That e'er shall dint a sable wound
On fair Glamorgan's velvet ground!

II.

From Chepstow's towers, ere dawn of morn,
Was heard afar the bugle horn;

And forth, in banded pomp and pride,
Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride.
They swore, their banners broad should gleam,
In crimson light, on Rymny's stream ;
They vow'd, Caerphili's sod should feel
The Norman charger's spurning heel.

III.

And sooth they swore—the sun arose,
And Rymny's wave with crimson glows ;
For Clare's red banner, floating wide,
Roll'd down the stream to Severn's tide !
And sooth they vow'd—the trampled green
Show'd where hot Neville's charge had been :
In every sable hoof-tramp stood
A Norman horseman's curdling blood !

IV.

Old Chepstow's brides may curse the toil,
That arm'd stout Clare for Cambrian broil,
Their orphans long the art may rue,
For Neville's war-horse forged the shoe.
No more the stamp of armed steed
Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet mead ;
Nor trace be there, in early spring,
Save of the Fairies' emerald ring.

THE DYING BARD.

AIR—*Daffydz Gangwen.*

The Welsh tradition bears, that a Bard, on his death-bed, demanded his harp, and played the air to which these verses are adapted; requesting that it might be performed at his funeral.

I.

DINAS EMLINN, lament; for the moment is nigh,
When mute in the woodlands thine echoes shall die:
No more by sweet Teivi Cadwallon shall rave,
And mix his wild notes with the wild dashing wave.

II.

In spring and in autumn thy glories of shade
Unhonour'd shall flourish, unhonour'd shall fade;
For soon shall be lifeless the eye and the tongue,
That view'd them with rapture, with rapture that sung.

III.

Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may march in their pride,
And chase the proud Saxon from Prestatyn's side;
But where is the harp shall give life to their name?
And where is the bard shall give heroes their fame?

IV.

And oh, Dinas Emlirn ! thy daughters so fair,
Who heave the white bosom, and wave the dark hair ;
What tuneful enthusiast shall worship their eye.
When half of their charms with Cadwallon shall die ?

V.

Then adieu, silver Teivi ! I quit thy loved scene,
To join the dim choir of the bards who have been ;
With Lewarch, and Meilor, and Merlin the Old,
And sage Taliessin, high harping to hold.

VI.

And adieu, Dinas Emlinn ! still green be thy shades,
Unconquer'd thy warriors, and matchless thy maids !
And thou, whose faint warblings my weakness can tell,
Farewell, my loved Harp ! my last treasure, farewell !

THE MAID OF TORO.

, low shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
All as a fair maiden, bewilder'd in sorrow,
Sorely sigh'd to the breezes, and wept to the flood.
"O, saints! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending;
Sweet Virgin! who hearest the suppliant's cry,
Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die!"

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fall,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread
rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour, came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary;
Slowly approaching a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien.

"O, save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying!
O, save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
Deadly cold on yon heath thy brave Henry is lying,
And fast through the woodland approaches the foe."



CHESTOW CASTLE, FROM THE BRIDGE



HELVELLYN FROM LEATHS WATER

I climb'd the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and wide.

W. Wordsworth

Scarce could he falter the tidings of sorrow,
And scarce could she hear them, benumb'd with
despair:
And when the sun sunk on the sweet lake of Toro,
For ever he set to the Brave and the Fair.

HELLVELLYN.

In the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Hellvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier-bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I CLIMB'D the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and
wide ;
All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was
bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I mark'd the sad spot where the wanderer had
died.

Dark green was that spot mid the brown mountain-
heather,
Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretch'd in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandon'd to weather,
Till the mountain-winds wasted the tenantless clay.

Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou
start?

How many long days and long weeks didst thou numoer,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, oh, was it meet, that,—no requiem read o'er him,—
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretch'd before him,—
Unhonour'd the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a Prince to the fate of the Peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are
gleaming;
In the proudly-arch'd chapel the banners are beaming;
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a Chief of the People should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentie lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
When, wilder'd, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the grey plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Hellvellyn and Catchedicam.

THE POACHER.

WELCOME, grave Stranger, to our green retreats,
Where health with exercise and freedom meets !
Thrice welcome, Sage, whose philosophic plan
By Nature's limits metes the rights of man ;
Generous as he, who now for freedom bawls,
Now gives full value for true Indian shawls :
O'er court, o'er customhouse, his shoe who flings,
Now bilks excisemen, and now bullies kings.
Like his, I ween, thy comprehensive mind
Holds laws as mouse-traps baited for mankind ;
Thine eye, applausive, each sly vermin sees,
That baulks the snare, yet battens on the cheese ;
Thine ear has heard, with scorn instead of awe,
Our buckskinn'd justices expound the law,
Wire-draw the acts that fix for wires the pain,
And for the netted partridge noose the swain ;
And thy vindictive arm would fain have broke
The last light fetter of the feudal yoke,
To give the denizens of wood and wild,
Nature's free race, to each her free-born child.
Hence hast thou mark'd, with grief, fair London's race,
Mock'd with the boon of one poor Easter chase,
And long'd to send them forth as free as when
Pour'd o'er Chantilly the Parisian train,

When musket, pistol, blunderbuss, combined,
And scarce the field-pieces were left behind !
A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismay'd
On every covey fired a bold brigade :
La Douce Humanité approved the sport,
For great the alarm indeed, yet small the hurt ;
Shouts patriotic solemnized the day,
And Seine re-echo'd *Vive la Liberté !*
But mad *Citoyen*, meek *Monsieur* again,
With some few added links resumes his chain.
Then since such scenes to France no more are known,
Come, view with me a hero of thine own !
One, whose free actions vindicate the cause
Of silvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades, where the proud oak o'ertops
Wide-waving seas of birch and hazel copse,
Leaving between deserted isles of land,
Where stunted heath is patch'd with ruddy sand ;
And lonely on the waste the yew is seen,
Or straggling hollies spread a brighter green.
Here, little worn, and winding dark and steep,
Our scarce mark'd path descends yon dingle deep :
Follow—but heedful, cautious of a trip,—
In earthly mire philosophy may slip.
Step slow and wary o'er that swampy stream,
Till, guided by the charcoal's smothering steam,
We reach the frail yet barricaded door
Of hovel form'd for poorest of the poor ;
No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke receives,
The walls are wattles, and the covering leaves ;
For, if such hut, our forest statutes say,
Rise in the progress of one night and day,
(Though placed where still the Conqueror's hests o'erawe,
And his son's stirrup shines the badge of law,)

The builder claims the unenviable boon,
To tenant dwelling, framed as slight and soon
As wigwam wild, that shrouds the native frore
On the bleak coast of frost-bar'd Labrador.¹

Approach, and through the unlatticed window peep—
Nay, shrink not back, the inmate is asleep ;
Sunk 'mid yon sordid blankets, till the sun
Stoop to the west the plunderer's toils are done.
Loaded and primed, and prompt for desperate hand,
Rifle and fowling-piece beside him stand,
While round the hut are in disorder laid
The tools and booty of his lawless trade ;
For force or fraud, resistance or escape,
The crow, the saw, the bludgeon, and the crape.
His pilfer'd powder in yon nook he hoards,
And the filch'd lead the church's roof affords—
(Hence shall the rector's congregation fret,
That while his sermon's dry his walls are wet.)
The fish-spear barb'd, the sweeping net are there,
Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes, and skins of hare,
Cordage for toils, and wiring for the snare.
Barter'd for game from chase or warren won,
Yon cask holds moonlight,² run when moon was none ;
And late-snatch'd spoils lie stow'd in hutch apart,
To wait the associate higgler's evening cart.

Look on his pallet foul, and mark his rest :
What scenes perturb'd are acting in his breast !
His sable brow is wet and wrung with pain,
And his dilated nostril toils in vain ;

¹ Such is the law in the New Forest, Hampshire, tending greatly to increase the various settlements of thieves, smugglers, and deer-stealers, who infest it. In the forest courts the presiding judge wears as a badge of office an antique stirrup, said to have been that of William Rufus. See Mr. William Rose's spirited poem, entitled, "The Red King."

² A cant term for smuggled spirits.

For short and scant the breath each effort draws,
And 'twixt each effort Nature claims a pause.
Beyond the loose and sable neckcloth stretch'd,
His sinewy throat seems by convulsion twitch'd,
While the tongue falters, as to utterance loath,
Sounds of dire import—watchword, threat, and oath.
Though, stupified by toil, and drugg'd with gin,
The body sleep, the restless guest within
Now plies on wood and wold his lawless trade,
Now in the fangs of justice wakes dismay'd.—

“ Was that wild start of terror and despair,
Those bursting eyeballs, and that wilder'd air,
Signs of compunction for a murder'd hare ?
Do the locks bristle and the eyebrows arch,
For grouse or partridge massacred in March ? ”—

No, scoffer, no ! Attend, and mark with awe,
There is no wicket in the gate of law !
He, that would e'er so lightly set ajar
That awful portal, must undo each bar ;
Tempting occasion, habit, passion, pride,
Will join to storm the breach, and force the barrier wide.

That ruffian, whom true men avoid and dread,
Whom bruisers, poachers, smugglers, call Black Ned,
Was Edward Mansell once ;—the lightest heart,
That ever play'd on holyday his part !
The leader he in every Christmas game,
The harvest-feast grew blither when he came,
And liveliest on the chords the bow did glance,
When Edward named the tune and led the dance.
Kind was his heart, his passions quick and strong,
Hearty his laugh, and jovial was his song ;
And if he loved a gun, his father swore,
“ 'Twas but a trick of youth would soon be o'er,
Himself had done the same some thirty years before.”

But he whose humours spurn law's awful yoke,
Must herd with those by whom law's bonds are broke,
The common dread of justice soon allies
The clown, who robs the warren, or excise,
With sterner felons train'd to act more dread,
Even with the wretch by whom his fellow bled.
Then, as in plagues the foul contagions pass,
Leavening and festering the corrupted mass,—
Guilt leagues with guilt, while mutual motives draw,
Their hope impunity, their fear the law ;
Their foes, their friends, their rendezvous the same,
Till the revenue baulk'd, or pilfer'd game,
Flesh the young culprit, and example leads
To darker villainy, and direr deeds.

Wild howl'd the wind the forest glades along,
And oft the owl renew'd her dismal song ;
Around the spot where erst he felt the wound,
Red William's spectre walked his midnight round.
When o'er the swamp he cast his blighting look,
From the green marshes of the stagnant brook
The bittern's sullen shout the sedges shook !
The wading moon, with storm-presaging gleam,
Now gave and now withheld her doubtful beam ;
The old Oak stoop'd his arms, then flung them high,
Bellowing and groaning to the troubled sky—
'Twas then, that, couch'd amid the brushwood sere,
In Malwood-walk young Mansell watch'd the deer :
The fattest buck received his deadly shot—
The watchful keeper heard, and sought the spot.
Stout were their hearts, and stubborn was their strife,
O'erpower'd at length the Outlaw drew his knife.
Next morn a corpse was found upon the fell—
The rest his waking agony may tell !

SONG.

OH, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
Nor bid me to maids that are younger repair,
For those raptures that still are thine own.

Though April his temples may wreath with the vine,
Its tendrils in infancy curl'd,
'Tis the ardour of August matures us the wine,
Whose life-blood enlivens the world.

Though thy form, that was fashion'd as light as a fay's,
Has assumed a proportion more round,
And thy glance, that was bright as a falcon's at gaze,
Looks soberly now on the ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me again,
Thy steps still with ecstasy move ;
Enough, that those dear sober glances retain
For me the kind language of love.

